

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1621

5 By: Representative Gonzales
6 By: Senators B. Ballinger, T. Garner, Beckham, M. Johnson
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO FIND COMMON GROUND IN ARKANSAS AND PROMOTE
10 COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE AISLE BY PROHIBITING
11 BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION; TO PROHIBIT THE
12 INSTALLATION OF BARRIERS IN THE CHAMBERS OF THE HOUSE
13 OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE; TO DECLARE AN
14 EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

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18 TO PROMOTE COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE AISLE
19 BY PROHIBITING THE INSTALLATION OF
20 BARRIERS IN THE CHAMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF
21 REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE; AND TO
22 DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.
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25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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27 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 10, Chapter 2, Subchapter 1, is amended
28 to add an additional section to read as follows:

29 10-2-133. Installation of barriers in chambers prohibited - Findings.

30 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

31 (1) It is vitally important that legislators find common ground
32 to achieve an effective and efficient legislative process;

33 (2) A key aspect of achieving this common ground is promoting
34 communication among all members, regardless of their party affiliation; and

35 (3) The installation of barriers in the chambers of the House of
36 Representatives and the Senate inhibits communication between legislators and



1 complicates the legislative process.

2 (b) The House of Representatives and the Senate shall not install
3 barriers between their members in their respective chambers, including
4 without limitation transparent barriers.

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6 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. If barriers between
7 the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate are present in the
8 chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate on the effective date
9 of this act, the barriers shall be removed within five (5) business days of
10 the effective date of this act.

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12 SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
13 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the General Assembly performs
14 actions critical to the public peace, health, and safety; that it is
15 essential that the General Assembly operate in an effective and efficient
16 manner to enact laws necessary to ensure the state's operation and the health
17 and safety of its residents; that the installation of barriers in the
18 chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate inhibits the
19 effective and efficient operation of the General Assembly; and that this act
20 is immediately necessary to provide for the removal of any barriers installed
21 in the chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate to create an
22 effective and efficient legislative process that benefits all residents of
23 the state and ensures the public peace, health, and safety. Therefore, an
24 emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for
25 the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become
26 effective on:

27 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

28 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,
29 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the
30 bill; or

31 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is
32 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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