

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 469

5 By: Senators C. Tucker, Gilmore
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO REDUCE VIOLENT CRIME IN ARKANSAS; TO
9 ESTABLISH THE VIOLENT CRIME CLEARANCE GRANT FUND; TO
10 PROVIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES WITH RESOURCES TO
11 COMBAT VIOLENT CRIME; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND
12 FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

15 TO REDUCE VIOLENT CRIME IN ARKANSAS; TO
16 ESTABLISH THE VIOLENT CRIME CLEARANCE
17 GRANT FUND; TO PROVIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT
18 AGENCIES WITH RESOURCES TO COMBAT VIOLENT
19 CRIME; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.
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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 6, is amended to add an
26 additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 8 – Violent Crime Clearance Grants

12-6-801. Legislative findings.

The General Assembly finds that:

31 (1) In 2021, there was a clearance rate of thirty-nine percent
32 (39%) for violent crimes reported in Arkansas, which means there were no
33 arrests for sixty-one percent (61%) of reported violent crimes;

34 (2) Low clearance rates undermine law enforcement efforts to
35 hold perpetrators accountable, to disrupt cycles of violence, and to provide
36 justice to victims;



1 (3) Research shows that enhanced investigative resources,
2 improved management structures, and oversight processes can increase
3 clearance rates and improve the chances that perpetrators are apprehended in
4 even the most difficult cases to clear; and

5 (4) Law enforcement agencies need additional resources and
6 support to strengthen investigations, apply community problem-solving
7 approaches to violent-crime hot spots, and implement programs that blend law
8 enforcement, social services, and community mobilization strategies.

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10 12-6-802. Definitions.

11 As used in this subchapter, "violent crime" means:

12 (1) Capital murder, § 5-10-101, murder in the first degree, § 5-
13 10-102, or murder in the second degree, § 5-10-103;

14 (2) Manslaughter, § 5-10-104;

15 (3) Kidnapping, § 5-11-102;

16 (4) False imprisonment in the first degree, § 5-11-103;

17 (5) Permanent detention or restraint, § 5-11-106;

18 (6) Robbery, § 5-12-102;

19 (7) Aggravated robbery, § 5-12-103;

20 (8) Battery in the first degree, § 5-13-201;

21 (9) Battery in the second degree, § 5-13-202;

22 (10) Aggravated assault, § 5-13-204;

23 (11) Terroristic threatening in the first degree, § 5-13-301;

24 (12) Domestic battering in the first degree, § 5-26-303,

25 domestic battering in the second degree, § 5-26-304, and domestic battering
26 in the third degree, § 5-26-305;

27 (13) Aggravated assault on a family or household member, § 5-26-
28 306;

29 (14) Engaging in a continuing criminal gang, organization, or
30 enterprise, § 5-74-104;

31 (15) Aggravated assault upon a law enforcement officer or an
32 employee of a correctional facility, § 5-13-211, if a Class Y felony;

33 (16) An attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit any of
34 the offenses enumerated in subdivisions (1)-(15) of this section; or

35 (17) A violation of any former law of this state that is
36 substantially equivalent to any of the offenses enumerated in subdivisions

1 (1)-(16) of this section.

3 12-6-803. Grant funding.

4 (a)(1) The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety, in
 5 consultation with the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and
 6 Training, shall develop grant applications to be used under this subchapter.

7 (2) The secretary shall consult with local law enforcement
 8 agencies when determining grant eligibility requirements and criteria under
 9 this subchapter.

10 (b) Grant awards under this subchapter:

11 (1) Shall be premised upon identifying and encouraging the
 12 adoption of law enforcement strategies that research demonstrates can reduce
 13 different types of violent crime and improve violent crime clearance rates;

14 (2) Shall target new initiatives and strategies to combat
 15 violent crime as proposed by local law enforcement agencies;

16 (3) May be used to provide the following for law enforcement
 17 agencies:

18 (A) Improved investigatory resources;

19 (B) Technical assistance;

20 (C) Law enforcement training;

21 (D) Law enforcement equipment;

22 (E) Contractual support; and

23 (F) Information systems for criminal justice purposes; and

24 (4) May be used to increase direct services to victims of
 25 violent crime through:

26 (A) The provision and retention of victim-witness
 27 coordinators;

28 (B) Enhanced accessibility to services;

29 (C) Increased awareness of victimization; and

30 (D) Partnership with local community providers to improve
 31 support and services to victims of violent crime.

32 (c) The secretary shall give preference to applicants that demonstrate
 33 a commitment to regional, multijurisdictional strategies to address community
 34 safety issues and to work with community-based organizations and government
 35 agencies to address violent criminal activity and improve violent crime
 36 clearance rates.

1 (d) The department shall administer all grant awards and expenditures
2 under this subchapter under applicable state and federal law.

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4 12-6-804. Additional duties.

5 (a) The Department of Public Safety shall:

6 (1) Analyze crime and arrest data to determine violent crime
7 clearance rates, identify which law enforcement agencies face the biggest
8 challenges in combating violent crime, and conduct qualitative research to
9 assess the capacity of law enforcement agencies to investigate and solve
10 violent crimes;

11 (2) Provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies to
12 share best practices for improving violent crime clearance rates based on the
13 analysis and research obtained under subdivision (b)(1) of this section;

14 (3) Periodically convene agencies, practitioners, and experts to
15 share resources, research, and advice about implementing evidence-based
16 practices that have been proven to reduce violent crime and improve
17 investigations of violent crime; and

18 (4) Assess how arrests for methamphetamine possession are
19 currently being processed through the justice system and how to make the
20 response more effective and less costly.

21 (b) The Secretary of the Department of Public Safety may hire
22 personnel necessary to carry out the duties of administering this subchapter.

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24 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 19, Chapter 5, Subchapter 12, is
25 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

26 19-5-1277. Violent Crime Clearance Grant Fund.

27 (a) There is created on the books of the Treasurer of State, the
28 Auditor of State, and the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State a miscellaneous
29 fund to be known as the "Violent Crime Clearance Grant Fund".

30 (b) The fund shall consist of:

31 (1) Moneys obtained from private grants or other sources that
32 are designated to be credited to the fund; and

33 (2) Any other revenues authorized by law.

34 (c) The fund shall be used by the Secretary of the Department of
35 Public Safety as provided in § 12-6-801 et seq. to fund grant awards.

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