

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

A Bill

SENATE BILL 534

5 By: Senator Crowell
6 By: Representative Gonzales
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO CREATE THE "ARKANSAS ROCKS! MINING AND
9 MINERAL TRAIL"; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
10

Subtitle

11 TO CREATE THE "ARKANSAS ROCKS! MINING AND
12 MINERAL TRAIL".
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14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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18 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 27, Chapter 67, Subchapter 2, is
19 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

20 27-67-230. Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail – Legislative
21 findings.

22 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

23 (1) Arkansas has long been noted for its mineral wealth and
24 beautiful rock formations;

25 (2) The geological diversity of the state provides residents and
26 visitors with:

27 (A) Excellent recreational opportunities; and

28 (B) Natural scenic beauty;

29 (3) In particular, southwest Arkansas has received national and
30 international recognition for its geological formations and unique
31 localities, including without limitation:

32 (A) Crater of Diamonds State Park located in Murfreesboro,
33 providing recreational opportunities for visitors to hike and to search for
34 diamonds atop a diamond-bearing volcano known as the Prairie Creek Diatreme;
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1 (B) Hot Springs National Park, set aside by the federal
2 government to preserve as an area for recreation long before the concept of a
3 national park existed, containing the intricate system of geothermal springs
4 that formed and today maintain a historic and thriving resort community;

5 (C) Mount Ida, renowned for its abundance of quartz and
6 known as the "Quartz Crystal Capital of the World";

7 (D) Jessieville, with its abundance of quartz and rock
8 shops;

9 (E) Clay deposits in Malvern and Perla, producing high
10 quality bricks from local clay and giving Malvern its nickname of "Brick
11 Capital of the World";

12 (F) Novaculite formations found throughout the Ouachita
13 Mountains, providing high-quality sharpening stones known as "Arkansas
14 Stones";

15 (G) Vanadium deposits, used in many high-tech and defense
16 applications;

17 (H) Deposits of other precious and semiprecious stones,
18 renowned for their beauty, including without limitation:

19 (i) Diamond;

20 (ii) Quartz; and

21 (iii) Wavellite;

22 (I)(i) Cinnabar deposits, found in a belt running through
23 Howard, Pike, and Clark counties.

24 (ii) The cinnabar mines near Murfreesboro provided
25 much of the mercury fulminate used for ammunition primers and detonators in
26 the weapons of the Allied troops during World War II;

27 (J) Brine deposits at a frontier post called Blakelytown,
28 driving historic salt production, which developed into the thriving community
29 of Arkadelphia; and

30 (K) The varied geography of the Ouachita Mountains and the
31 rolling topography of the Western Gulf Coastal Plain, the two physiological
32 regions making up southwest Arkansas;

33 (4) The geology of the southwest region has had profound effects
34 on American culture through its influence on the development of local
35 communities and the individuals who call them home, including without
36 limitation:

1 (A) The historic development of spring training as a
 2 standard component of professional baseball in Hot Springs;

3 (B) The comedic talents of Lum and Abner from Waters, now
 4 Pine Ridge;

5 (C) The musical and television talents of Glen Campbell,
 6 who was proud to tell anyone and everyone throughout his career that he was
 7 from Delight;

8 (D) The country-western and gospel stylings of T. Texas
 9 Tyler of Mena;

10 (E) The folk singing tradition preserved by Emma Dusenbury
 11 of Mena, who:

12 (a) Contributed one hundred sixteen (116) songs to
 13 the Library of Congress; and

14 (b) Sang at the state centennial celebration in
 15 Little Rock;

16 (F) President William Jefferson Clinton, who grew up in
 17 Hot Springs;

18 (G) Actor Alan Ladd of Hot Springs; and

19 (H) Gangster and casino owner Owen Vincent "Owney" Madden
 20 of Hot Springs;

21 (5) Hiking trails, lakes, rivers, and other non-consumptive
 22 forms of recreation are in plentiful supply throughout the southwest region,
 23 including without limitation:

24 (A) Eagle Rock Loop, the longest hiking loop in Arkansas;

25 (B) The Ouachita National Recreation Trail;

26 (C) Five (5) state parks; and

27 (D) Three (3) International Mountain Biking Association
 28 Epic Trails; and

29 (6) The designation of the Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral
 30 Trail is essential to preserve the region's history and natural beauty and to
 31 promote the economic development of cities in the Diamond Lakes region and in
 32 Polk County.

33 (b) The route along State Highway 301 from Crater of Diamonds State
 34 Park to its intersection with State Highway 27 in Murfreesboro; then along
 35 State Highway 27 through Kirby becoming U.S. Highway 70 to its intersection
 36 with State Highway 27 in Glenwood; then north on State Highway 27 through

1 Caddo Gap and Norman to its intersection with U.S. Highway 270 in Mount Ida;
2 then west on U.S. Highway 270 to its intersection with State Highway 27; then
3 north along to State Highway 27 to its intersection with State Highway 298 in
4 Story; then east along State Highway 298 to its intersection with State
5 Highway 7 south of Jessieville; then south along State Highway 7 through Blue
6 Springs to its intersection with State Highway 192; then west along State
7 Highway 192, West Strawberry Road, to its intersection with State Highway
8 227; then north along State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road, to Lake Ouachita
9 State Park; picking up at the intersection of State Highway 192 and State
10 Highway 227, then south along State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road, to its
11 intersection with Mid America Boulevard; then along Mid America Boulevard to
12 its intersection with State Highway 277; picking up at the intersection of
13 State Highway 277 and its first intersection with Mid America Boulevard, then
14 south along State Highway 227 to its intersection with U.S. Highway 270 in
15 Piney; then east along U.S. Highway 270, Albert Pike Road becoming U.S.
16 Highway 70 to the divergence of U.S. Highway 270 and U.S. Highway 70; picking
17 up at the intersection of U.S. Highway 270 and State Highway 51 near Price,
18 then along State Highway 51 through Butterfield becoming U.S. Highway 270,
19 Oliver Lancaster Boulevard; then along U.S. Highway 270, Oliver Lancaster
20 Boulevard, becoming Martin Luther King Road, becoming South Main Street to
21 its intersection with West Page Avenue in Malvern; then south along West Page
22 Avenue becoming U.S. Highway 67, through Arkadelphia and Gurdon to its
23 intersection with State Highway 51, west of Beirne; then south along State
24 Highway 51 through Beirne to its intersection with State Highway 53; then
25 north along State Highway 53 to its intersection with State Highway 26 in
26 Hollywood; then west along State Highway 26 through Antoine and Delight to
27 its intersection with State Highway 27 in Murfreesboro; picking up at the
28 intersection of State Highway 227, Mountain Pine Road and U.S. Highway 270 in
29 Piney, along U.S. Highway 270 through Mount Ida to its intersection with
30 State Highway 88 in Pencil Bluff; then west along State Highway 88 through
31 Pine Ridge to its intersection with U.S. Highway 71 near Mena; which will be
32 known as the "Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail".

33 (c) The Arkansas Department of Transportation shall erect appropriate
34 signs along the route described in subsection (b) of this section designating
35 the route as the "Arkansas Rocks! Mining and Mineral Trail".

36 (d) If the Arkansas Department of Transportation does not have the

1 funds available to erect the signs required under subsection (c) of this
2 section, the Arkansas Department of Transportation may accept and use gifts,
3 grants, and donations received from private, public, and nonprofit sources,
4 including without limitation a city street department or a county road
5 department for:

6 (1) Acquiring and installing the signs required under subsection
7 (c) of this section; and

8 (2) Maintaining, replacing, or reconstructing the signs required
9 under subsection (c) of this section.

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