

State of Arkansas  
91st General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2017

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1526

By: Representative M. Gray

By: Senator Irvin

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO MODIFY ACT 143 OF 2017 TO SPECIFY THAT A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK SHALL INCLUDE THE TAKING OF FINGERPRINTS; TO AUTHORIZE LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT FOR OPTOMETRISTS; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO MODIFY ACT 143 OF 2017 TO SPECIFY THAT A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK SHALL INCLUDE THE TAKING OF FINGERPRINTS; TO AUTHORIZE LICENSURE BY ENDORSEMENT FOR OPTOMETRISTS; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-90-302(c)(9), concerning the requirements for licensure by endorsement for an optometrist, as amended by Acts 2017, No. 143, § 1, is amended to read as follows:

(9) Application to the Identification Bureau of the Department of Arkansas State Police for a state and national criminal background check, to be conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which shall include the taking of fingerprints.

SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that in order to become a licensed



optometrist in the State of Arkansas, optometrists who are licensed in other states must retake examinations if the optometrist has not taken all parts of the examination since 1997, which causes a delay in licensure and places a barrier on optometrists moving into the state; that licensure by endorsement authorizes the State Board of Optometry to license individuals with optometrist licenses in other states quickly and easily; that other states offer reciprocity to optometrists licensed in Arkansas through licensure by endorsement; and that this act is immediately necessary to ensure that optometric practices are performed within the State of Arkansas with a license issued by the State Board of Optometry, to bring Arkansas laws regarding reciprocity of optometrists as quickly as possible, and to increase health care access to optometric services for the citizens of the State of Arkansas. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

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

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

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

**APPROVED: 03/13/2017**