

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

As Engrossed: S1/22/25

A Bill

SENATE BILL 50

By: Senators J. Boyd, *J. English*

By: Representative Wing

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE A LEGISLATIVE STUDY OF WORKFORCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM; TO REQUIRE THE CONSIDERATION OF ANY LEGISLATIVE CHANGES NECESSARY TO ADDRESS ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING THE STUDY OF WORKFORCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE A LEGISLATIVE STUDY OF WORKFORCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM; AND TO REQUIRE CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION NECESSARY TO ADDRESS ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING THE STUDY.

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

SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative study of workforce and social services reform – Findings – Scope – Requirements.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Arkansas needs an educated and skilled workforce for employment in diverse occupations and industries;

(2) The Arkansas workforce is increasingly in need of access to higher quality education and training programs aligned to the growing technological competencies required in occupations;

(3) Arkansas's public workforce system is a maze of confusing programs and is not meeting the challenges faced by employers and workers;

(4) Arkansas does not have a centralized location that includes



a clearinghouse of the available public assistance programs, how to access them, and eligibility requirements;

(5) The United States Congress is considering the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq., and new opportunities to grant states the ability to pilot comprehensive innovation demonstration programs; and

(6) Research has shown that an integrated system of workforce and social services more effectively supports the most vulnerable citizens in escaping poverty through targeted support and work to achieve dignity and self-sufficiency, which will not only lift individuals but also strengthen Arkansas's economy.

(b)(1) The Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council shall meet to conduct a study of issues related to the reform of the state's workforce and social services.

(2) Meetings for the purpose of conducting the study required under this section shall be held at least one (1) time every three (3) months but may occur more often at the call of the cochairs of the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council.

(c)(1) The purpose of the study required under this section is to study issues and ideas related to the reform of the state's workforce and social services and to consider related legislation that may be necessary to remedy any issues identified during the course of the study.

(2) The study required under this section shall include without limitation a study of:

(A) State models for coordinating and fully integrating workforce, social services, education, child care, and healthcare programs;

(B) Alternative approaches that the state should consider to achieve improved outcomes in workforce and social service programs, including without limitation:

(i) Programs of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq., including without limitation oversight for an integrated regional services delivery system;

(ii) The unemployment insurance program;

(iii) Vocational rehabilitation programs;

(iv) The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

program;

(v) The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program;

(vi) The Employment and Training Program for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients; and

(vii) The Child Care Assistance Program;

(C) Performance outcomes of various workforce programs, including without limitation an analysis of the number of common participants enrolled in multiple programs across state agencies;

(D) The creation of an asset map that incorporates office locations, case management systems, and customer intake and eligibility procedures for the services and programs studied under this section; and

(E) Legislation that may be necessary to address any issues identified in the course of the study conducted under this section.

(d) The Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council may form work groups to focus on specific issues or topics as needed.

(e) In conducting the study required under this section, the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council may include and consider input from subject matter experts, who may be used to facilitate meetings, conduct research, or provide technical assistance.

(f)(1)(A) On or before October 1, 2026, the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council shall file with the cochair of the Legislative Council a final written report of the activities, findings, and recommendations of the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council under this section, including any draft legislation.

(B) Upon adoption of the final written report filed under subdivision (f)(1)(A) of this section, the Legislative Council shall submit a copy of the adopted final written report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

(2) The final written report required under subdivision (f)(1) of this section shall:

(A) Contain recommendations for the integration of the services and programs considered during the study, including without limitation any state department or agency reorganizations needed to achieve

desired outcomes for the people of Arkansas; and

(B) Address the following key components:

(i) How current services and programs are organized and administered at the state agency level;

(ii) A vision for how service delivery can be integrated for the benefit of all Arkansans who rely on the services and programs studied, including without limitation services and programs delivered at the state, regional, and local levels;

(iii) Opportunities for financial integration and efficient methods for allocating costs across multiple services and programs;

(iv) Recommendations on how supportive services, such as child care, trauma recovery, and health insurance, can better support employment outcomes;

(v) Identification of efficiencies leading to cost savings that can be used for enhanced services, such as increased resource availability for Arkansans to access education and training; and

(vi) Identification of opportunities for Arkansas to participate in any federally authorized workforce demonstration project, including without limitation provisions requiring waiver requests.

(g) During the course of the study required under this section, the Director of the Division of Workforce Services shall provide updates to the Hospital, Medicaid, and Developmental Disabilities Study Subcommittee of the Legislative Council related to efforts by the United States Congress to reauthorize and reform the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq., including without limitation opportunities to incorporate recommendations contained within the final report through new demonstration and waiver authority or other changes to current federal laws.

(h) The study required under this section expires on December 31, 2026.

/s/J. Boyd