

THE BELIEVE

IN ARKANSAS BLUEPRINT 2025



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WELCOME

“

Americans for Prosperity-Arkansas (AFP-AR) believes free people are capable of extraordinary things which is why we take a principled interest in policies that remove government barriers and unlock people's potential. By supporting policies from the bottom up, AFP-AR aims to empower everyone so that they can contribute to their community.

Our work at AFP-AR is largely made possible by concerned citizens who turn into grassroots activists, working alongside us to advance policies that will help people improve their lives. From state elections to legislative battles at the capital, AFP-AR has its finger on the pulse of what Arkansans want to see across the state.

We hope you join us in fighting for commonsense policies that Reignite the American Dream! Keep reading to learn how we want to approach the biggest issues facing our state.

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Ryan

THE ECONOMY

Budget Reform

A unified budget that brings together all spending and all revenue in the same annual budget bill. This would empower Arkansas to manage the entire state budget comprehensively, encourage policymakers to engage in serious legislative spending deliberations, and would allow us to set and achieve spending reduction targets. Currently, the Arkansas budget process requires over 100 bills to be filed to create the fiscal budget.

Tax Reform

Arkansas can practice fiscal responsibility by focusing funding on the government's core responsibilities, protecting taxpayers' hard-earned dollars from unnecessary spending, and keeping on a path to continued income tax reduction. Arkansas is on a path to zero income tax, a plan that reflects the belief that citizens know how to best invest their money in ways that will benefit their families and the Arkansas economy.

Portable Benefits

Portable benefits funds are accounts funded by workers to cover various benefits, including health insurance, with benefits attached to the individual rather than the employer. These funds serve as either primary or supplemental benefits, with contributions being voluntary and adjustable by the worker. The challenge arises when hiring entities offer voluntary benefits in addition to pay per job, which may inadvertently meet criteria that classify contingent workers as employees under legal tests, presenting a potential issue for the flexible employment model.

Oppose Right of First Refusal

The Right of First Refusal (ROFR) policy grants incumbent utilities exclusive rights to construct, maintain, and own transmission lines within their designated service territories. This process inherently limits competitive bidding by allowing only the incumbent utility to initially bid on transmission projects. This structure can potentially restrict innovation and efficiency gains that could arise from a more open bidding process, and could result in higher utility prices for consumers.



Affordable Workforce Housing

Permit Accessory Dwelling Units - Several states have passed laws permitting homeowners to build ADUs, which can take the form of backyard cottages, basement apartments, or garage conversions. This allows for more housing units, at a lower cost, and can create additional income for homeowners.

Cap Minimum-Lot-Size Requirements - Minimum-lot-size requirements are one of the key regulations that prevent entry-level housing construction because they require each new house to sit on a large piece of land. State policymakers can put a cap on local minimum lot sizes where sewer and water infrastructure are available.

Benefits Cliff Reform

When low-income individuals begin to earn more, they often face the loss of certain state benefits, creating a disincentive for financial independence. The additional income is frequently insufficient to compensate for the lost benefits, leading many to avoid accepting higher wages, promotions, or increased hours to maintain their eligibility. This perpetuates poverty. However, gradually reducing benefits as income rises, rather than eliminating them outright, can help break this cycle. It encourages a transition off benefits, potentially reducing long-term dependency and benefiting both employers and employees by increasing labor participation.

77,000 AR job openings
(Nov. '23)
(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

44th Top States for Business
2023 Ranking (CNBC)

Arkansas Labor Force Participation
Rate is decreasing (5th lowest in the nation)
(AR Division of Workforce Service)



HEALTH CARE



Out-of-state License Recognition for Medical Professionals

According to the Arkansas Center for Research in Economics, fifty-nine counties are medically underserved and another 15 are partially underserved. A way to expand the number of providers would be to create universal license recognition for medical professionals, a step 18 states have taken over the past decade to boost employment and speed access to care across several medical professions.



Direct Primary Care

Direct patient care is an innovative new method of healthcare delivery that provides unparalleled convenience and affordability of care for one low monthly fee. With a DPC membership, patients have access to quality doctors, referrals to discount lab tests and imaging services, and often deep discounts on generic drugs. Other included benefits encompass no hidden fees or charges and doctor availability at all hours.



Certificate of Need Repeal

To enhance healthcare access, Arkansas should eliminate restrictions on critical health services and foster innovation in service delivery by abolishing Certificate of Need (CoN) laws for home health, hospice, nursing homes, and psychiatric facilities. Currently, CoN laws empower unelected officials and possibly competitors to prevent healthcare providers from constructing new facilities or expanding existing ones without obtaining prior approval. Although intended to control healthcare costs, data from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicates that Arkansas' healthcare spending per capita continues to rise annually, surpassing that of Texas, a state that has already repealed CoN laws.

Arkansas ranks 48th

in the nation for youth mental health.
(United Health Foundation 2021)

Arkansas is the only state

with a moratorium on residential treatment facilities for adolescents.

Forty Arkansas Counties

are designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas.
(Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, March 2023)

04

FOUNDATIONAL EDUCATION





Competency-based Education

Remove arbitrary seat-time rules and focus on content mastery. Most education systems are organized around specific requirements related to the number of hours (or even minutes) of instruction a student receives in a day, week, and school year. Instead, they should focus on mastering concepts and skills, regardless of time, place, and pace. We should free teachers to individualize learning, so that students stay interested and passionate about their education.



Learn Everywhere

Provide an education credit for learning, wherever it occurs. Children learn through a variety of approaches and experiences: this includes learning in a traditional classroom and experiences far beyond the walls of a traditional school. Learn Everywhere policies create a path for students to earn course credits for these out-of-classroom learning opportunities.



Defend Education Choice Policies

Arkansas' education choice policies, including the LEARNS Act, empower families to select the most suitable educational path for their children. By defending these policies, we ensure parents have the freedom to make informed decisions, fostering an environment where every child can thrive according to their unique needs and aspirations.

Arkansas families have six education options

for their students: residentially assigned public school, public school district transfer, charter school, private school, and micro-school.

Arkansas invests heavily in public education,

with \$5.77 billion budgeted in Fiscal Year 2024 alone. (AR DFA posted 28/24/23)

https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/budgetOffice/fy2024_funded_budget_schedule.pdf

05

CONSTITUTIONALLY LIMITED GOVERNMENT





Protect Free Speech

Arkansas should be a stronghold for free speech and diverse ideas, as guaranteed by the First Amendment. We must ensure that the citizens of Arkansas have the freedom to express themselves and support the causes they believe in without fear of censorship or retaliation.

Over the past five years,

Arkansas has enacted five bills to protect freedom of speech and personal privacy, including the FORUM Act (2019).



Driver's License Revocation Fee Repeal

Over 32,000 Arkansans are without a driver's license due to non-driving-related technical violations, like failing to appear in court or pay fines. Suspending driver's licenses should be reserved for actual driving offenses and serious legal infractions, not for complicating the lives of those striving to earn a living and settle their debts to the state. Eliminating the fees for reinstating driver's licenses would significantly benefit Arkansas families, enabling them to drive their children to school and commute to work, thereby supporting the state's economy while allowing them to take responsibility.





Learn more and stay connected at
americansforprosperity.org/believe-in-arkansas/



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