

Republican Legislative Caucus - 2007 Legislative Session

BLUEPRINT FOR REFORM

A POLICY PROPOSAL THAT REFLECTS THE VIEWS AND VALUES OF EVERDAY ARKANSANS

As a group, the Republican Legislative Caucus puts forth a common-sense package of policy proposals that will be priorities during the 2007 Legislative Session. The "Blueprint for Reform" is the following:

* PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

* Current Arkansas law and the definition of "public use" should be tougher and more restrictive to reflect the historical definition of "public use." Within this, private property rights should be strengthened by limiting the uses for condemnation.

* CONSUMER PROTECTION

* Stop Predatory Practices of Pay-Day Lending

* The Republican Caucus will be working with Arkansans Against Abusive Pay-Day Lenders to stop this egregious practice.

* TAX REFORM & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

* Cut taxes on pension/retirement income

* Increase the exemption from \$6,000 to \$12,000 annually

* Make it harder to raise the sales tax

* Require super-majority of both legislative bodies

* Provide consumer tax credit of \$500 annually for alternative fuels including bio-based fuels and ethanol.

* Repeal sales tax on utilities for manufacturers.

* CRIME & PUNISHMENT

* "Jessica's Law"

* Strengthen penalties for sexual predators

* Mandate minimum first-time penalty of 25 years to life

* Sex offenders released from incarceration must wear GPS monitor at all times.

* Implement stiffer penalties, including hard labor, for manufacturers of methamphetamine.

* Expand drug courts to provide rehabilitation for drug users.

* EDUCATION

* Put Arkansas school children first by ensuring a greater portion of tax dollars are spent in the classroom.

* Increase accountability and transparency with a uniform accounting system ensuring existing funds are spent efficiently and effectively.

* AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE

* PATIENTS RIGHT TO KNOW / PERFORMANCE & PRICING

* Ensure that hospital procedures and prescription drug costs are publicly disclosed to provide side-by-side comparison of costs and performance.

* MODERNIZE MEDICAID

* Use innovative solutions such as Health Savings Accounts (HSA's) and electronic health records to give recipients more control and flexibility over their Medicaid dollars.

* FAMILY

* Implement standards to ensure that adopted children are placed in traditional family environments.