

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

1 State of Arkansas  
2 90th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2015  
4

*As Engrossed: S3/17/15*

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 951

5 By: Senator Elliott  
6

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE  
9 CONCERNING A SYSTEM-WIDE ASSESSMENT OF UNDERSERVED  
10 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

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14 TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE  
15 CONCERNING A SYSTEM-WIDE ASSESSMENT OF  
16 UNDERSERVED GEOGRAPHIC AREAS.  
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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21 *SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY.*

22 *(a)(1) A systems assessment template for underserved areas and any*  
23 *tools related to the template shall be developed or recommended for the*  
24 *purpose of assessing geographic-specific needs of underserved areas around*  
25 *the state.*

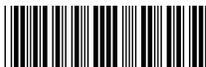
26 *(2) The systems assessment template for underserved areas, and*  
27 *any tools related to the template, shall be developed or recommended by a*  
28 *workgroup that consists of:*

29 *(A) Two (2) members of the Senate appointed by the*  
30 *President Pro Tempore of the Senate;*

31 *(B) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives*  
32 *appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;*

33 *(C) Employees of the Bureau of Legislative Research; and*

34 *(D) Members of the community with expertise in leadership,*  
35 *economic development, geography, and other fields relevant to the development*  
36 *of a systems assessment template for underserved areas.*



1           (3) No later than October 15, 2016, the systems assessment  
2 template for underserved areas and any tools related to the template shall be  
3 developed or recommended by the workgroup to the Senate Committee on  
4 Education and the House Committee on Education.

5           (b) The purpose of the systems assessment template for underserved  
6 areas and any tools related to the template to:

7           (1) Assess, inform, and guide policy makers;

8           (2)(A) Be used by the Department of Education, the State Board  
9 of Education, and the Commissioner of Education to inform decision making  
10 concerning school districts and public schools that are in danger of or  
11 qualify as academic distress, fiscal distress, or facilities distress school  
12 districts or public schools.

13           (B) The state board and the commissioner are encouraged to  
14 use the systems assessment template for underserved areas and any tools  
15 related to the template before a school district or public school is placed  
16 in academic distress, fiscal distress, or facilities distress status.

17           (C) The results of a systems assessment template for  
18 underserved areas, and any tools related to the template, that is used by the  
19 state board and the commissioner shall be shared with the school district or  
20 public school by a method determined to have maximum communication impact by  
21 the state board and the commissioner.

22           (D) A school district shall not be consolidated, annexed,  
23 reconstituted, or taken over by the state board before the state board and  
24 the commissioner perform a systems assessment template for underserved areas,  
25 and any tools related to the template;

26           (3) Be used by other state agencies when appropriate to inform  
27 decision making; and

28           (4) Be used voluntarily by communities with fidelity as a self-  
29 assessment exercise.

30           (c) The systems assessment template for underserved areas and any  
31 tools related to the template shall provide information about underserved  
32 areas related to the following without limitation:

33           (1) Quality of life, including:

34           (A) Availability of professionals in the community;

35           (B) Housing;

36           (C) Safety;

- 1 (D) Entertainment opportunities;
- 2 (E) Social and recreational opportunities, both indoor and
- 3 outdoor;
- 4 (F) Healthy food choices;
- 5 (G) Shopping;
- 6 (H) Civic participation, expansive and inclusive;
- 7 (I) Social interactions, expansive and inclusive;
- 8 (J) Transportation options; and
- 9 (K) Opportunities for children to have a healthy start
- 10 from early childhood through prekindergarten;
- 11 (2) Economic development and economic opportunity, including:
- 12 (A) Plans and promotion of economic development
- 13 activities, such as:
- 14 (i) Entrepreneurship;
- 15 (ii) Place-based opportunities;
- 16 (iii) Place-based challenges;
- 17 (iv) Creative economy opportunities;
- 18 (v) Private sector efforts;
- 19 (vi) Public sector efforts; and
- 20 (vii) Roles of state and local public agencies; and
- 21 (B) Infrastructure challenges and strengths;
- 22 (3) Capacity building, including:
- 23 (A) Inclusive leadership building;
- 24 (B) Inclusive leadership sharing; and
- 25 (C) Talent and aspiration audit; and
- 26 (4) Demographic information of a community, including:
- 27 (A) Racial or ethnic groups;
- 28 (B) Genders;
- 29 (C) Socioeconomic statuses;
- 30 (D) Ages;
- 31 (E) Religions; and
- 32 (F) Other relevant information.

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34 /s/Elliott  
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