

1 State of Arkansas

# A Bill

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3 Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1156

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5 By: Representative Warren

6 By: Senator K. Hammer

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## For An Act To Be Entitled

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AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE ELIGIBILITY OF

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A SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR SURVIVOR ANNUITY BENEFITS

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UNDER THE ARKANSAS TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM; TO

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DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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## Subtitle

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TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE

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ELIGIBILITY OF A SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR

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SURVIVOR ANNUITY BENEFITS UNDER THE

19

ARKANSAS TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM; AND

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TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

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

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SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 24-7-710(b)(1)(A)(i), concerning survivor annuity benefits for surviving spouses under the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, is amended to read as follows:

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(b)(1)(A)(i) Unless the active member otherwise directs an alternative

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beneficiary to receive the member's residue with a payable balance by using a

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beneficiary form approved by the system, the active member's surviving

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spouse, who was married to the active member for at least ~~the two (2) years~~

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one (1) year immediately preceding the active member's death, shall receive

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an annuity computed in the same manner in all respects as if the active

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member had retired on the date of the active member's death and elected

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Option A under § 24-7-706 to provide one hundred percent (100%) survivor

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annuity benefits, including benefits applicable under § 24-7-713, for his or

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her surviving spouse.



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2           SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
3 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the operations of a state  
4 public retirement system are complex; that the Arkansas Teacher Retirement  
5 System must be able to meet the needs of its members as anticipated by the  
6 General Assembly; that certain provisions of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement  
7 System Act, § 24-7-201 et seq., need immediate revision and updating to  
8 address administrative complexities caused by these provisions and to bring  
9 these provisions into conformance with sound public pension policy and  
10 actuarial requirements; that the revisions and updates are of great  
11 importance to members of the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System and to other  
12 citizens of the State of Arkansas; that as the Arkansas Teacher Retirement  
13 System operates on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, an effective date of  
14 July 1, 2025, is necessary in order to allow the provisions within this act  
15 to begin on the first day of the fiscal year and to allow for a structured  
16 and proper administration of the procedures referenced in this act; that the  
17 updates and revisions to the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System Act are of  
18 great importance and necessary for protecting member benefits and clarifying  
19 the reporting and contribution requirements of employers participating in the  
20 Arkansas Teacher Retirement System; and that this act is necessary in order  
21 to maintain an orderly system of benefits for the members of the Arkansas  
22 Teacher Retirement System. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and  
23 this act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health,  
24 and safety, shall become effective on July 1, 2025.

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27   **APPROVED: 2/27/25**  
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