

State of Arkansas  
95th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2025

## A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1855

By: Representative Ennett  
By: Senators K. Hammer, J. Scott

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAWS CONCERNING THE POWERS AND  
DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE  
ARKANSAS FORESTRY COMMISSION; TO AMEND THE LAWS  
RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS; TO AMEND THE  
AUTHORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ADJUST  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOUNDARIES HAVING  
OVERLAPPING BOUNDARIES; TO AMEND THE AUTHORITY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO RECOMMEND CHANGES TO  
OTHER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOUNDARIES; AND FOR  
OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAWS CONCERNING THE POWERS  
AND DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE AND THE ARKANSAS FORESTRY  
COMMISSION; AND TO AMEND THE LAWS  
RELATING TO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOUNDARIES.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-284-125 is amended to read as follows:  
14-284-125. Boundaries of overlapping, abutting, or contiguous  
districts — Definition.

(a)(1) The State Forestry Commission Department of Agriculture shall  
have authority may make recommendations to the county court to adjust the  
boundaries of fire protection districts:



1                   (A) Districts having overlapping boundaries;

2                   (B) Districts abutting an area for which there is no fire  
 3 protection service; or

4                   (C) Contiguous districts.

5 ~~The commission shall adjust the boundaries of overlapping fire districts upon~~  
 6 ~~the request of either district. The commission shall adjust the boundaries so~~  
 7 ~~that each district receives approximately fifty percent (50%) of the area~~  
 8 ~~that is within the boundaries of both districts.~~

9                   (2)(A) Except as provided in subdivision (a)(2)(B) of this  
 10 section, a district may request in writing a recommendation for an adjustment  
 11 from the Department of Agriculture under this section.

12                   (B) A contiguous district may make a request under  
 13 subdivision (a)(2)(A) of this section:

14                   (i) If an agreement exists among the affected  
 15 districts; or

16                   (ii) Upon a showing of good cause for the alteration  
 17 of the boundaries of the districts.

18                   (3) The Department of Agriculture shall notify the district that  
 19 requested the recommendation under subdivision (a)(2) of this section if the  
 20 Department of Agriculture will make a recommendation to adjust the boundaries  
 21 under this section.

22                   (b) If the Department of Agriculture makes a recommendation under this  
 23 section to adjust the boundaries of a district:

24                   (1) Within thirty (30) days of the recommendation, the district  
 25 that requested a recommendation under subdivision (a)(2) of this section  
 26 shall file a petition to adjust the boundary with the county court of the  
 27 county in which the area of adjustment exists and shall attach the  
 28 recommendation to the petition;

29                   (2) Upon the setting of a hearing by the county court, the  
 30 district that requested a recommendation under subdivision (a)(2) of this  
 31 section shall provide public notice of the county court hearing by  
 32 publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least one  
 33 (1) time, one (1) week in advance of the county court hearing; and

34                   (3) The county court shall:

35                   (A)(i) Consider the recommended adjustment of boundaries  
 36 filed under subdivision (b)(1) of this section and shall enter an order:

1                               (a) Accepting the recommended adjustment of  
2 the boundaries;

3                               (b) Rejecting the recommended adjustment of  
4 the boundaries and maintaining the existing boundaries; or

5                               (c) Rejecting the recommended adjustment of  
6 the boundaries and adjusting the boundaries as determined by the county court  
7 to be just and proper.

8                               (ii) If the boundaries are altered under subdivision  
9 (b)(3)(A)(i) of this section, the order of the county court shall contain a  
10 legal description and a map depicting the adjusted boundary or boundaries;  
11 and

12                               (B) Create a new fire protection district map under § 12-  
13 10-329 if the boundaries are altered under subdivision (b)(3)(A)(i) of this  
14 section.

15                               (c) This section is supplemental to other provisions of law regarding  
16 the establishment of district boundaries, including without limitation § 14-  
17 20-108.

18                               (d)(1) As used in this section, "district" means a district that  
19 provides fire protection services.

20                               (2) As used in this section, "district" includes without  
21 limitation a:

22                               (A) Nonprofit fire protection corporation or association;

23                               (B) Nonprofit corporation organized as a volunteer fire  
24 department or a rural fire department;

25                               (C) Fire protection district organized under § 14-284-101  
26 et seq. or § 14-284-201 et seq.;

27                               (D) Suburban fire improvement district organized under §  
28 14-92-201 et seq.; and

29                               (E) County-created subordinate service district that  
30 provides fire protection services under §§ 14-14-708 and 14-14-709.

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33 **APPROVED: 4/17/25**  
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