

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR
Meeting Jointly
Wednesday, April 1, 2026
1:00 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Missy Irvin, Chair; and Clint Penzo; Representatives Jeff Wardlaw, Chair; Jeremy Wooldridge, Vice Chair; Mary Bentley, Cameron Cooper, Denise Jones Ennett, Kenneth B. Ferguson, Zack Gramlich, Dolly Henley, Jack Ladyman, Wayne Long, Stephen Magie, Kendra Moore, Mark Perry, Jay Richardson, and Bart Schulz

Other members present: Senators Justin Boyd, Jonathan Dismang, Jim Dotson, Bart Hester, and Bryan King; Representatives Lincoln Barnett, Howard M. Beaty, Jr., Nick Burkes, Jon S. Eubanks, Jimmy Gazaway, Tippi McCullough, Richard McGrew, Jessie McGruder, Jason Nazarenko, Shad Pearce, Trey Steimel, and Dwight Tosh

Representative Wardlaw called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve the April 1, 2026, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Representative Ladyman made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Senator Irvin, and the motion carried.

Presentation by Breathe Free Arkansas [Exhibits C1-C2]

Terrilyn Jones, Program Coordinator, Breathe Free Arkansas, and Breathe Free Arkansas Delegation, presented the dangers of tobacco and vaping.

Overview of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) [Exhibit D]

Brad Nye, Director, RHTP, Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), and Jim Hudson, Secretary and Chief Fiscal Officer, DFA, presented an overview of the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of County Operations & Division of Medical Services, Review of Rule, Health Care Coverage for Incarcerated Eligible Individuals [Exhibit E]

Mary Franklin, Director, Division of County Operations, DHS, and Elizabeth Pitman, Director, Division of Medical Services, DHS, presented the rule outlining coverage available to eligible incarcerated youth including care coordination services and targeted case management services.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, the rule stands as reviewed.

Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), Arkansas Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (ABESPA), Review of Rule, Arkansas Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Rules [Exhibit F]

Nathaniel Roe, Executive Director, ABESPA, and Matt Gilmore, Boards and Commissions and Public Health Programs Policy Coordinator, ADH, presented the rule updating the scope of practice for audiologists and the licensing renewal date.

Representative Wardlaw stated that, without objection, the rule stands as reviewed.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.