

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025

HR 1074

4
5 By: Representative Bentley

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8 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

9 TO RECOGNIZE THE CONWAY KIWANIS BOOKCASE FOR EVERY
10 CHILD PROJECT FOR INCREASING LITERACY AND STUDENT
11 RETENTION RATES BY BUILDING PERSONALIZED BOOKCASES AS
12 GIFTS FOR CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE FEDERAL HEAD START
13 PROGRAM.

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16 **Subtitle**

17 TO RECOGNIZE THE CONWAY KIWANIS BOOKCASE
18 FOR EVERY CHILD PROJECT FOR INCREASING
19 LITERACY AND STUDENT RETENTION RATES BY
20 BUILDING PERSONALIZED BOOKCASES AS GIFTS
21 FOR CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE FEDERAL
22 HEAD START PROGRAM.

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24 WHEREAS, the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project works to
25 increase literacy and student retention in schools by building personalized
26 oak bookcases of good quality and giving these, along with a starter set of
27 gently used books, annually to fifty (50) children four (4) and five (5)
28 years of age who are enrolled in the federal Head Start program administered
29 by the Community Action Program for Central Arkansas; and

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31 WHEREAS, since 2005, one thousand (1,000) children have received
32 bookcases through the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project; and

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34 WHEREAS, Jim Davidson, author of several motivational books, is the
35 founder of the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project; and

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1 WHEREAS, former Conway Police Chief Randall Aragon was highly
2 instrumental in starting the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, Jim Davidson recalled that he asked a friend named Howard
6 Welch, who was a member of Davidson's Sunday school class and had a
7 woodworking shop at his home, to make a sample bookcase; and
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9 WHEREAS, the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project began with
10 a plan to give a bookcase to each child in the local Head Start program, and
11 the director of the local Head Start program at that time was Phyllis Fry,
12 who was also a member of Jim Davidson's church; and
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14 WHEREAS, the original members of the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every
15 Child project committee were founder Jim Davidson, former Conway Police Chief
16 Randall Aragon, former local Head Start director Phyllis Fry, Hendrix College
17 head librarian Amanda Moore, publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat Scot
18 Morrissey, retired business executive and master craftsman Mickey Cox,
19 housewife Nina Russ, Faulkner County librarian Ruth Voss, pastor of
20 Cornerstone Bible Church Dr. Larry Pillow, businesswoman Linda Linn, retired
21 school teacher Nancy Mitchell, retired school counselor Linda Hammontree, and
22 executive director of the Conway Housing Authority Mary Boyd; and
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24 WHEREAS, the first committee meeting for the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase
25 for Every Child project committee was held on June 9, 2005, at City Hall in
26 Conway; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project is focused
29 on helping preschool children who are being raised in low-income homes and
30 the need to serve these children took on even greater significance for Jim
31 Davidson when he learned that sixty-one percent (61%) of low-income families
32 in the nation had no books at all in their homes; and
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34 WHEREAS, in early 2020, the Kiwanis Club of Conway assumed oversight of
35 the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project from Jim Davidson, who is
36 still active in the project; and

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2 WHEREAS, Richard Plotkin is the chair of the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase
3 for Every Child project; and
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5 WHEREAS, Richard Plotkin is part of the seven-person operating
6 committee, composed of executive director of University of Central Arkansas
7 Public Appearances Amanda Horton, Faulkner County Collector Sherry Koonce,
8 director of the Faulkner-Van Buren Regional Library John McGraw, University
9 of Central Arkansas Associate Professor Charlotte Rainey Parham, sixth-grade
10 literacy teacher Janie Walburn, and executive director of the Community
11 Action Program for Central Arkansas Jennifer Welter, that provides functional
12 oversight of the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project; and
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14 WHEREAS, the ultimate goal of the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every
15 Child project is to promote literacy at an early age, enhancing the potential
16 of participating children to excel at all levels of education and in their
17 eventual chosen professions; and
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19 WHEREAS, the bookcases awarded in 2024 through the Conway Kiwanis
20 Bookcase for Every Child project were built by the Nabholz Construction
21 millwork shop in Conway, and Centennial Bank; and
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23 WHEREAS, Conway Corp and Virco Inc., each agreed to donate one thousand
24 dollars (\$1,000) beginning in 2024 for bookcase construction, and are
25 therefore considered "Sustaining Partners" of the project; and
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27 WHEREAS, the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase for Every Child project bookcases
28 are personalized for each child with a nameplate created and donated by
29 Billy's Trophies & Awards of Conway; and
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31 WHEREAS, each child who receives a bookcase via the Conway Kiwanis
32 Bookcase for Every Child project also receives a stuffed animal "reading
33 buddy" donated by project supporter Crystal Spellmann and a personalized
34 bookmark handcrafted by Carol Crockett, manager of the Faulkner County
35 Satellite Office of Child Care Aware of Northcentral Arkansas; and
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1 WHEREAS, the primary source of books for the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase
2 for Every Child project is the Faulkner County Library, which supplies the
3 project books it receives through community donations and supplements this
4 via numerous supporters including the Life 10 Sunday school class at Conway
5 First Baptist Church, which buys a children's Bible and a book of bedtime
6 Bible stories for each recipient,
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8 NOW THEREFORE,

9 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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12 THAT the House of Representatives recognize the Conway Kiwanis Bookcase
13 for Every Child project for its work to increase literacy and student
14 retention rates by building personalized bookcases as gifts for children
15 enrolled in the federal Head Start program.
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption, a copy of this resolution be
18 presented to Richard Plotkin by the Chief Clerk of the House of
19 Representatives.
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