

Consolidation of Arkansas Cabinet-Level Agencies: Bills Filed/92nd Arkansas General Assembly



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Bills have been pre-filed that would consolidate various Arkansas agencies into Cabinet-level departments.

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson announced earlier this fall his proposal to consolidate Cabinet-level departments from 42 to 15. (See previous post [here](#).)

The Governor described this action as the “first comprehensive effort to trim state government since 1972.” Other environmental/natural resource agencies would be consolidated into the Department of Agriculture.

For example, Governor Hutchinson had proposed that several Arkansas environmental/energy/natural resource agencies be consolidated into a “Department of Energy and Environment.”

Bills have been introduced into the upcoming 92nd Arkansas General Assembly addressing various aspects of the Governor’s proposal.

House Bill 1070, sponsored by Representative Davis and Senator Hester, would amend Arkansas Code Title 25 to add an additional chapter titled:

Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 (“Act”)

Cabinet-level departments that would be created include:

- The Department of Agriculture;
- The Department of Commerce;
- The Department of Corrections;
- The Department of Education;
- The Department of Energy and Environment;
- The Department of Finance and Administration;
- The Department of Health;
- The Department of Human Services;
- The Department of the Inspector General;
- The Department of Labor and Licensing;
- The Department of Military;
- The Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism;
- The Department of Public Safety;
- The Department of Transformation and Shared Services; and

- The Department of Veteran Affairs

House Bill 1117, which includes the same sponsors, addresses the Department of Agriculture, which would include natural resources agencies such as the Arkansas Forestry Commission and Arkansas Natural Resources Commission.

Other Boards, Commissions, somewhat related to environmental and natural resources issues that would be placed under the Department of Agriculture include:

- Abandoned Pesticide Advisory Board
- The Commission on Water Well Construction
- The Private Wetland and Riparian Zone Creation, Restoration, and Conservation Committee
- Ouachita River Commission
- The Red River Compact Commission
- The Wetlands Technical Advisory Committee

A copy of House Bill 1070 can be found [here](#) and House Bill 1117 [here](#).