

**“Final Hours, Lasting Impact: *What’s at Stake as Arkansas Legislative Session Closes?*,” by Dr. Chris Jones**

The Arkansas General Assembly is racing toward the finish line, with the 2025 legislative session expected to adjourn this week. As lawmakers enter the final stretch, major policy decisions are still in play—ones that will shape the lives of Arkansans long after the Capitol doors close.

Topping the list are proposals to build a new 3,000-bed mega prison and change how pharmacies can operate. Lawmakers also debated a bill that increases per-pupil public school funding and another that requires truckers to pass an English literacy test. This all feels like expansion of government.

While some of these bills have been discussed for weeks, others are moving quickly. Too quickly for the public to weigh in.

That’s why this moment matters. When time is short and pressure is high, deals get made, language gets changed, and controversial bills can pass with little scrutiny. This is when citizens should be paying the most attention.

It’s also when the long-term values of the legislature become clear. A vote for a \$750 Million down payment on a likely \$2 Billion mega prison signals a priority.

As the clock runs out, Arkansans should ask: Do these choices reflect what our communities actually need? Are lawmakers listening, or just following their own self-interest?

Regardless of what passes on the final day, the impact will linger. So will the memory of who stood for what. For voters, that’s not just a political note. It’s a reminder that the end of the session is not the end of accountability. It’s the beginning!

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