



Arkansas

Citizens First Congress



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY GUIDE
TO THE
2009 ARKANSAS
LEGISLATIVE SESSION

See how your legislators voted.

2009 SESSION SUMMARY

To the thousands of people who got involved in making their government work better, thank you! Our members and allies proved again that the political process works better when more people from every corner of the state and every lot in life work together for our common good.

We started the 2009 session with Ten Priorities for a Better Arkansas and won significant progress on:

- closing the education achievement gap,
- improving energy policy to address global warming and save consumers money,
- making sure workers' claims are heard when employers steal their wages, and
- creating conservation easements to help private landowners protect critical wetland habitats.



Bruce Lockett



Rubye Emerson

As always, the victories need follow-up and the losses were not complete. Our education and energy policies are much stronger today, but more remains to be done. We set the stage for future progress on economic development and water policy. We have more work to do to create a fair tax system, advance the Dream Act, strengthen civil rights laws, and improve HIV-AIDS prevention and treatment for minorities.

Hundreds of people made a difference by coming to Little Rock for one of our six lobby days. Many got involved in hometown events and met with their lawmakers. Citizens researched issues and sent e-mails to legislators from their couches – responding to our alerts and more than quadrupling traffic on our website to get fact sheets, watch video of committee hearings and stay involved. Over 70 organizations and 500 people met with us in 2008 to build our agenda for this legislative session.

The 2009 Arkansas Legislative Session will be remembered most for the lottery implementation and resulting college scholarships; the tobacco tax increase that funded big health care improvements; and budget shortfalls caused by a deepening recession. Many worthy programs and services were left unfunded because of the tight budget.

Beyond these high profile issues, we monitored all 2,285 bills filed during the 88-day session. Details on many other bills, such as the important new Task Force on Poverty supported by Advocates for Children and Families, are in this guide and even more are on our website. Our interns from Hendrix, the Clinton School and UALR and our staff did a great job helping Arkansans make a difference – thank you!

Every legislator has a very difficult job and we thank them all for their service to a better Arkansas. If you disagree with your legislators on an issue, ask them to explain their vote; if you agree, thank them! Your lawmakers serve us all better when they know you're informed and engaged.

Thanks for doing your part to make Arkansas stronger,

Bruce Lockett, Rubye Emerson – CFC co-chairs

Handwritten signatures of Bruce Lockett and Rubye Emerson. The signature of Bruce Lockett is on the left, and the signature of Rubye Emerson is on the right.

CONTENTS

This report is a guide...	pg 4
How to read this guide	pg 5
Legislative Scorecard	pg 6
Find Out More	pg 10
Sponsors	pg 11
Overall Scores	pg 12
How the Congress Agenda is selected	pg 14
CFC Member Groups	pg 15

THIS REPORT IS A GUIDE...

to how every legislator voted on the 41 bills that the Congress thought were most important that had recorded votes. Though the CFC took positions on other bills, some did not come up for a vote. It does not endorse or condemn any legislator, it simply compares votes taken by legislators to the Congress' positions.

The report scores legislators on the Congress' Ten Priorities for a Better Arkansas as well as other issues on our broad agenda. We break the votes down into specific issue areas so you can easily find out how your legislator voted on the issues that you care about most.

During the legislative session the Congress Steering Committee votes to support, oppose, or track various bills based on the Congress' agenda. We advocate for those positions, monitor how

legislators vote and compare the votes to the position the Congress took.

This guide does not tell you whether your legislator is "good" or "bad". You should ask why they voted the way they did and what it would take to get their support more often. Legislators are usually happy to explain their thinking. There are many complexities that are impossible to put in a voting chart. Charts tell you how your legislators tend to vote, but do not explain any single vote.

Legislators are volunteers who generally hold other jobs (they do receive a small stipend, but not a salary). Most of them don't have legislative staff or aides, and they considered over 2,000 pieces of legislation in the past three months. It's an incredible load to keep up with, even for the most seasoned members. We respect every legislator, even when we disagree.

Other significant legislation was considered which is not included in this guide. You can find more on www.CitizensFirst.org or on www.arkleg.state.ar.us — the Arkansas Legislature's web site.



Former CFC Chair Fannie Fields of Marvell discusses the achievement gap with sponsor Rep. Rainey of Dumas.



A student meets with Rep. Adcock during the Youth Lobby Day.



Panel founders Jean Gordon and Pat Youngdahl talk with Rep. Cheatham at the CFC lobby lunch.

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE

- “✓” means the legislator voted with the Congress position
 - “✗” means the legislator voted against the Congress position.
-
- **If the Congress opposed a bill,** “✓” means that the legislator voted **against** the bill, and “✗” means that they voted **for** the bill.
If the Congress supported a bill, “✓” means that the legislator voted **for** the bill, and “✗” means that they voted **against** the bill.
“✓” and “✗” do not show whether they voted for or against the bill.
 - A “✓” counts as one point, and “✗” counts as zero points to calculate the scores.
 - “NV” means “nonvoting”, and is counted as a “nay” vote because not voting has the same effect as voting against a bill. When the NV is in favor of the CFC’s position on a bill it counts for 0.5 points. If the NV is against the CFC’s position it counts for zero points.
 - Occasionally members are excused (E) from a vote. An "E" is not counted in the score.
 - It is customary for the Speaker of the House to be excused from all but the most controversial votes as he must also focus a great deal on making sure the House functions smoothly -- no easy task! Because of this, we have not given the Speaker (Rep. Robbie Wills) a score, but you can still see how he voted on all of the bills.
 - In the Overall Score Section, lead sponsors of our PRIORITY bills are marked with two asterisks **. One asterisk * means they were the lead sponsor of a bill which we supported.

At the CFC Youth Summit, members prepared to attend committee meetings at the Capitol by seeing which committees their legislators serve on.



LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

The overall scores show the percentage of the time legislators voted with our position. They ranged from a high of 95% to a low of 34% in the House and from 94% to 72% in the Senate.

This overall section also shows legislators' scores in each of the seven issues areas: agriculture, civil rights, economic justice, education reform, environment, government and election reform, and public health.

You can find the full guide, with all of the issue sections, at www.CitizensFirst.org. Each issue section has a summary of the bills we followed, a record of how each legislator voted and a score showing the percentage of the time the legislators voted with the Congress position on that specific issue. In the bill summary, bills that passed will be followed by their Act number, while ones that did not pass will have only the bill number.

The Congress owes great thanks to our members, allies and supporters for their work on these issues. *They* are the engine of change in Arkansas. And we thank the lawmakers for putting in the time and hard



You're never too young to get to know your representatives.



See our Legislative Directory to find out more about these legislators. It has contact information and photos for every legislator, as well as maps of the districts and committees.

Find the Directory at www.CitizensFirst.org/resources

Overall Scores

House	Ag	Civ R	Econ	Edu	Env	Gov/Elec	Health	Overall
Abernathy	100%	100%	63%	100%	70%	75%	100%	76%
Adcock	100%	29%	75%	100%	100%	100%	0%	78%
Allen	100%	71%	75%	100%	80%	100%	100%	82%
Baird	50%	57%	38%	100%	78%	100%	0%	65%
Baker	100%	100%	75%	100%	78%	100%	100%	89%
Barnett	100%	43%	50%	100%	100%	75%	0%	70%
Betts	100%	57%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	78%
Blount *	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Bradford	100%	71%	63%	100%	89%	75%	100%	78%
Breedlove	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Brown	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	89%
J. Burris	100%	57%	50%	100%	78%	50%	0%	68%
M. Burris *	100%	86%	75%	100%	67%	75%	100%	81%
Carnine	100%	71%	38%	100%	89%	75%	0%	70%
Carroll *	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Carter	50%	57%	31%	83%	56%	100%	0%	55%
Cash **	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Cheatham	100%	100%	63%	100%	89%	75%	100%	84%
Clemmer	100%	43%	50%	100%	94%	100%	0%	72%
Cole	100%	57%	63%	83%	78%	75%	100%	73%
Cook	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	89%
Cooper	100%	86%	75%	100%	90%	75%	100%	87%
Cowling	100%	57%	63%	67%	33%	50%	100%	59%
Creekmore *	100%	14%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	76%
Dale	100%	29%	38%	100%	78%	50%	100%	62%
Davenport	100%	86%	75%	83%	89%	75%	100%	84%
Davis	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Dickinson	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%
Dismang	100%	43%	38%	83%	100%	100%	0%	68%
Dunn	100%	100%	50%	83%	80%	75%	100%	79%
Edwards *	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	86%
English	100%	43%	63%	83%	78%	50%	0%	65%
Everett	100%	71%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	84%
Flowers	100%	71%	75%	83%	89%	75%	0%	78%
Garner	50%	29%	50%	100%	78%	75%	0%	59%
Gaskill	100%	100%	63%	83%	78%	100%	100%	84%
George	100%	86%	63%	100%	78%	50%	100%	81%
Glidewell	50%	43%	25%	100%	70%	75%	0%	55%
Green	50%	86%	50%	100%	80%	75%	100%	74%
Greenberg	50%	71%	63%	83%	89%	100%	0%	73%
Hall	100%	71%	81%	83%	89%	75%	100%	82%
Hardy	100%	100%	63%	100%	80%	75%	100%	84%
Harrelson	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Hawkins	100%	86%	75%	100%	90%	75%	100%	87%
Hobbs	100%	29%	63%	100%	56%	75%	0%	57%
Hopper	100%	57%	38%	100%	100%	75%	0%	70%

Overall Scores

House (cont.)	Ag	Civ R	Econ	Edu	Env	Gov/Elec	Health	Overall
House	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	92%
Hoyt	100%	86%	63%	100%	80%	75%	100%	82%
Hutchinson *	100%	43%	38%	83%	67%	100%	0%	54%
Hyde	50%	57%	63%	83%	60%	100%	100%	68%
Ingram	100%	100%	50%	83%	80%	100%	100%	82%
Kerr	50%	43%	38%	67%	78%	75%	0%	54%
Kidd	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
King	100%	29%	25%	50%	28%	75%	0%	34%
Lea	100%	43%	50%	83%	78%	75%	0%	65%
Lewellen	100%	100%	75%	100%	70%	100%	100%	84%
Lindsey **	100%	71%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	86%
Lovell	100%	57%	50%	67%	90%	75%	100%	71%
Lowery	0%	57%	63%	100%	56%	75%	100%	62%
Maloch *	100%	29%	38%	67%	50%	50%	100%	47%
Malone	100%	29%	25%	83%	56%	75%	0%	49%
Martin	100%	57%	38%	83%	80%	100%	0%	66%
Maxwell **	100%	57%	63%	100%	80%	75%	100%	76%
McCrary	100%	86%	50%	83%	78%	75%	100%	76%
McLean	100%	71%	63%	83%	89%	100%	100%	78%
Moore	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%
Nickels *	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	89%
Nix	100%	100%	75%	100%	78%	75%	100%	86%
Overbey	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Patterson	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Pennartz	100%	100%	75%	83%	89%	100%	100%	89%
Perry	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Pierce *	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Powers	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%
Pyle	100%	14%	63%	83%	44%	75%	100%	51%
Ragland	100%	29%	38%	100%	89%	75%	100%	65%
Rainey **	100%	100%	75%	100%	80%	100%	100%	89%
Reep*	50%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Reynolds	100%	71%	63%	83%	89%	75%	100%	78%
Rice	100%	29%	25%	67%	67%	50%	0%	49%
Roebuck	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
J. Rogers	100%	71%	50%	100%	56%	100%	0%	70%
T. Rogers	100%	71%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	84%
Sample	100%	57%	50%	83%	83%	50%	100%	69%
Saunders	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	89%
Shelby	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%
Slinkard	100%	43%	38%	83%	89%	75%	0%	62%
G. Smith	100%	100%	81%	100%	89%	75%	100%	91%
L. Smith **	50%	100%	75%	83%	100%	100%	100%	89%
Stewart	100%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Summers	100%	14%	38%	100%	56%	75%	100%	54%
Tyler *	100%	86%	75%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%

Overall Scores

House (cont.)	Ag	Civ R	Econ	Edu	Env	Gov/Elec	Health	Overall
Wagner	100%	86%	75%	100%	80%	75%	100%	84%
Webb **	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Wells	100%	71%	63%	100%	70%	50%	100%	76%
Wilkins	100%	71%	50%	67%	56%	75%	100%	62%
Williams *	50%	86%	75%	100%	78%	75%	100%	81%
Wills	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Woods	50%	57%	56%	100%	60%	75%	0%	57%
Word	50%	100%	75%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Senate								
Altes	50%	71%	67%	88%	89%	75%	0%	75%
Baker	100%	71%	67%	88%	89%	75%	0%	78%
Bledsoe	100%	57%	50%	88%	89%	75%	100%	75%
Bookout	100%	86%	67%	88%	89%	75%	100%	83%
Broadway **	50%	86%	67%	88%	89%	100%	100%	83%
Bryles**	100%	100%	50%	100%	94%	100%	100%	90%
Capps	100%	86%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	91%
Crumbly *	100%	86%	67%	88%	89%	100%	100%	86%
Elliott **	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	94%
Faris	100%	86%	50%	75%	94%	75%	100%	79%
Glover	100%	86%	67%	88%	89%	75%	100%	83%
Hendren	100%	71%	50%	88%	78%	75%	100%	75%
Horn	100%	71%	50%	88%	89%	75%	100%	78%
G. Jeffress	100%	86%	67%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
J. Jeffress	100%	86%	67%	100%	89%	100%	100%	89%
B. Johnson	100%	71%	67%	88%	94%	75%	100%	82%
D. Johnson	100%	100%	83%	88%	100%	75%	100%	91%
Key *	100%	86%	33%	88%	100%	75%	0%	78%
Laverty	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	75%	100%	94%
Luker	100%	86%	67%	100%	94%	75%	100%	88%
Madison	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	94%
Malone	100%	86%	67%	100%	89%	75%	100%	86%
Miller	100%	71%	67%	88%	89%	75%	100%	81%
Pritchard	100%	57%	50%	88%	89%	75%	0%	72%
Salmon	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	75%	100%	92%
Smith	100%	86%	67%	88%	89%	75%	100%	83%
Steele *	100%	71%	67%	100%	89%	75%	100%	83%
Taylor	100%	57%	67%	88%	89%	75%	0%	75%
Teague *	100%	71%	50%	88%	83%	75%	100%	76%
Thompson	100%	86%	75%	88%	100%	100%	100%	91%
Trusty	100%	50%	60%	88%	94%	50%	0%	72%
Whitaker	100%	57%	50%	88%	89%	75%	0%	72%
Wilkins *	100%	100%	67%	100%	94%	100%	100%	93%
Wilkinson	100%	71%	50%	100%	89%	100%	100%	83%
Wyatt	100%	86%	67%	88%	89%	75%	100%	83%

FIND OUT MORE

Find the full scorecard at CitizensFirst.org!

The full guide contains details on which bills we used to calculate the scores you've found in this summary. It includes descriptions of the bills we supported, opposed and tracked, and charts of how the legislators voted on each bill.



Arkansas Citizens First Congress

Special thanks to our interns, who helped us read all of these bills!

*Gregory Cooper
Ashley Davis
Erica Fitzhugh
Jennifer Gray
Zachary Hunter
Jennifer Narrow*

This guide gives you an overview of the most important bills the CFC followed during the session. If you want information on more bills than we could fit in this guide, visit our searchable online bill tracking system. You can also find links to the full text of bills.

You can search the database for bills related to the issues that interest you most, every bill we supported, or only bills related to the Congress' Ten Priorities for a Better Arkansas. And it is linked to our database of legislators, where you can find contact information and committee assignments for your Representative and Senator as well as see how they voted on every bill we tracked!

Visit www.CitizensFirst.org/bill-tracking to find out more!

www.CitizensFirst.org/bill-tracking

Bill *Tracking*



SPONSORS

We would like to thank the key sponsors of bills we supported, especially sponsors of our priority bills. These legislators have a wide variety of overall scores, but deserve special recognition for taking leadership on issues for the public interest.

Priority Sponsors



Rep. Kathy Webb, Little Rock
Overall score: 95%



Rep. David Rainey, Dumas
Overall score: 89%



Sen. Joyce Elliott, Little Rock
Overall score: 94%



Rep. Lindsley Smith, Fayetteville
Overall score: 89%



Rep. Joan Cash, Jonesboro
Overall score: 92%



Rep. Uvalde Lindsey, Fayetteville
Overall Score: 87%



Sen. Steve Bryles, Blytheville
Overall score: 90%



Sen. Shane Broadway, Bryant
Overall score: 83%



Rep. Allen Maxwell, Monticello
Overall score: 76%

Other Key Sponsors

Rep. Nancy Duffy Blount – 92%
Rep. Mike Burris – 81%
Rep. Richard Carroll – 92%
Rep. Dawn Creekmore – 76%
Rep. John Edwards – 86%
Rep. Donna Hutchinson – 54%
Rep. Bruce Maloch – 47%
Rep. Jim Nickels – 89%

Rep. Bobby Joe Pierce – 86%
Rep. Gregg Reep – 86%
Rep. Linda Tyler – 89%
Rep. Darrin Williams – 81%
Sen. Jack Crumbly – 86%
Sen. Johnny Key – 78%
Sen. Tracy Steele – 83%
Sen. Larry Teague – 76%
Sen. Hank Wilkins – 93%

OVERALL SCORES

Here is a listing of legislators in the order of their overall scores. The scores are rounded to one decimal point to provide a more accurate listing.



Members and staff do some last minute planning on the Capitol steps, before asking their legislators for a “yes” vote on legislation to close the education achievement gap.

At a CFC breakfast with legislators, Eddy Moore described provisions of the energy efficiency legislation to Representative Cook.



House	SCORE
Webb (D, Little Rock)	94.6%
Blount (D, Marianna)	91.9%
Breedlove (D, Greenwood)	91.9%
Carroll (G, North Little Rock)	91.9%
Cash (D, Jonesboro)	91.9%
Davis (D, Earle)	91.9%
Harrelson (D, Texarkana)	91.9%
House (D, Fayetteville)	91.9%
G. Smith (D, Camden)	90.5%
Rainey (D, Dumas)	89.5%
Baker (D, Osceola)	89.2%
Brown (D, Wynne)	89.2%
Cook (D, Williford)	89.2%
Dickinson (D, Newport)	89.2%
Moore (D, Arkansas City)	89.2%
Nickels (D, North Little Rock)	89.2%
Pennartz (D, Fort Smith)	89.2%
Powers (D, Hope)	89.2%
Saunders (D, Hot Springs)	89.2%
Shelby (D, Hot Springs)	89.2%
L. Smith (D, Fayetteville)	89.2%
Tyler (D, Conway)	89.2%
Cooper (D, Melbourne)	86.8%
Hawkins (D, Vilonia)	86.8%
Edwards (D, Little Rock)	86.5%
Kidd (D, Jonesboro,)	86.5%
Lindsey (D, Fayetteville)	86.5%
Nix (D, Benton)	86.5%
Overbey (D, Lamar)	86.5%
Patterson (D, Piggott)	86.5%
Perry (D, Jacksonville)	86.5%
Pierce (D, Sheridan)	86.5%
Reep (D, Warren)	86.5%
Roebuck (D, Arkadelphia)	86.5%
Stewart (D, Kirby)	86.5%
Word (D, Pine Bluff)	86.5%
Hardy (D, Camden)	84.2%
Lewellen (D, Little Rock)	84.2%
Wagner (D, Manila)	84.2%
Cheatham (D, Crossett)	83.8%
Davenport (D, Yellville)	83.8%
Everett (D, Salem)	83.8%
Gaskill (D, Paragould)	83.8%
T.Rogers (D, Stuttgart)	83.8%
Hall (D, Marvel)	82.4%
Allen (D, Little Rock)	81.6%

House (cont.)	SCORE	House (cont.)	SCORE
Hoyt (D, Morrilton)	81.6%	Kerr (R, Little Rock)	54.1%
Ingram (D, West Memphis)	81.6%	Summers (R, Bentonville)	54.1%
M. Burris (D, Malvern)	81.1%	Pyle (R, Cedarville)	51.4%
George (D, Dardanelle)	81.1%	Malone (R, Fort Smith)	48.7%
Williams (D, Little Rock)	81.1%	Rice (R, Waldron)	48.7%
Dunn (D, Forrest City)	79.0%	Maloch (D, Magnolia)	47.4%
Adcock (D, Little Rock)	78.4%	King (R, Green Forest)	33.8%
Betts (D, Searcy)	78.4%	Wills (D, Conway)	E
Bradford (D, Pine Bluff)	78.4%	Senate	
Flowers (D, Pine Bluff)	78.4%	Elliott (D, LittleRock)	94.4%
McLean (D, Batesville)	78.4%	Madison (D, Fayetteville)	94.4%
Reynolds (D, Quitman)	78.4%	Laverty (D, Jasper)	94.3%
Abernathy (D, Mena)	76.3%	Wilkins (D, Pine Bluff)	93.1%
Maxwell (D, Monticello)	76.3%	Salmon (D, North Little Rock)	91.7%
Wells (D, Paris)	76.3%	D. Johnson (D, Little Rock)	91.4%
Creekmore (D, East End)	75.7%	Thompson (D, Paragould)	91.2%
McCrary (D, Lonoke)	75.7%	Capps (D, Searcy)	90.9%
Green (R, Van Buren)	73.7%	Bryles (D, Blytheville)	90.3%
Cole (D, Lockesburg)	73.0%	J. Jeffress (D, Crossett)	88.9%
Greenberg (R, Little Rock)	73.0%	Luker (D, Wynne)	87.5%
Clemmer (R, Benton)	71.6%	Crumbly (D, Widener)	86.1%
Lovell (D, Marked Tree)	71.1%	G. Jeffress (D, Louann)	86.1%
Barnett (R, Siloam Springs)	70.3%	Malone (D, Arkadelphia)	86.1%
Carnine (R, Rogers)	70.3%	Bookout (D, Jonesboro)	83.3%
Hopper (R, Lakeview)	70.3%	Glover (D, Carlisle)	83.3%
J.Rogers (D, Walnut Ridge)	70.3%	Smith (D, Hot Springs)	83.3%
Sample (R, Hot Springs)	68.9%	Steele (D, North Little Rock)	83.3%
Hyde (D, North Little Rock)	68.4%	Wilkinson (D, Greenwood)	83.3%
J. Burris (R, Harrison)	67.6%	Wyatt (D, Batesville)	83.3%
Dismang (R, Beebe)	67.6%	Broadway (D, Bryant)	82.9%
Martin (R, Prairie Grove)	65.8%	B. Johnson (D, Morrilton)	81.9%
Baird (R, Lowell)	64.9%	Miller (D, Melbourne)	80.6%
English (R, North Little Rock)	64.9%	Faris (D, Malvern)	79.2%
Lea (R, Russellville)	64.9%	Baker (R, Conway)	77.8%
Ragland (R, Marshal)	64.9%	Horn (D, Foreman)	77.8%
Dale (R, Dover)	62.2%	Key (R, Mountain Home)	77.8%
Lowery (D, El Dorado)	62.2%	Teague (D, Nashville)	76.4%
Slinkard (R, Gravette)	62.2%	Altes (R, Fort Smith)	75.0%
Wilkins (D, Bono)	62.2%	Bledsoe (R, Rogers)	75.0%
Cowling (D, Foreman)	59.5%	Hendren (R, Gravette)	75.0%
Garner (R, Maumelle)	59.5%	Taylor (D, Pine Bluff)	75.0%
Hobbs (R, Rogers)	56.8%	Pritchard (R, Elkins)	72.2%
Woods (R, Springdale)	56.6%	Whitaker (R, Cedarville)	72.2%
Carter (R, Cabot)	55.4%	Trusty (R, Russellville)	72.1%
Glidewell (R, Fort Smith)	55.3%		
Hutchinson (R, Bella Vista)	54.1%		

HOW THE CONGRESS AGENDA IS SELECTED

The CFC has seven issue caucuses that meet between legislative sessions to discuss issues and build agendas on Agriculture, Civil Rights, Economic Justice, Education Reform, the Environment, Government and Election Reform, and Public Health. There are also four regional caucuses made up of representatives from each community group within that region. In 2009 we added a youth caucus.

Delegates from CFC member groups attend a convention before each legislative session where they present issues they want the Congress to endorse. These issues are considered, discussed and debated. Delegates then elect a broad platform of issues to support and a priority platform of Ten Priorities for a Better Arkansas for the upcoming session. See photos from the 2008 convention at www.citizensfirst.org.



After months of meetings around the state, delegates from CFC member organizations spent two days and nights finalizing the 2009 Legislative Agenda. The August conference launches the last lap of campaign development before the Arkansas General Assembly convenes in January.

Tax Reform

Arkansas taxes low income people at **twice** the rate that we tax our wealthiest people. We have one of the most regressive tax policies in the country and nearly every time the legislature meets they make the system worse. We support low- and middle-income tax relief and oppose tax cuts for big businesses and the wealthy. To keep the state budget balanced, we also oppose tax cuts made without corresponding spending cuts or tax increases.

Annual Legislative Sessions

With the November 2008 passage of the constitutional amendment authorizing annual legislative sessions, the Arkansas General Assembly will now meet every year: in regular session in odd numbered years for approximately three months, and in fiscal session in even numbered years for a maximum of 45 days. Fiscal sessions will be limited to only budget issues unless two-thirds of the House and Senate agree to hear a non-budget measure.

2008-2009 CITIZENS FIRST CONGRESS MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
Arkansas Canoe Club
Arkansas Climate Action Project
Arkansas Conservation Coalition
Arkansas Farm Community Alliance
Arkansans for Grandparents
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
Arkansas Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice
Arkansas Rice Growers Association
Arkansas Wildlife Federation
Bearden CDC
Boys, Girls and Adults CDC
Center for Artistic Revolution
Central Arkansas Development Council
Citizens Against Resource Exploitation
Concerned Citizens of Marvell
Delta Desha Veteran's Housing Foundation
Delta E-Team
Drew County NAACP
Eastside Community Club of Dermott
Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association
First Presbyterian Church
Future Builders, Inc.
Gould Citizens Advisory Council
Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas
IUE-CWA
Jefferson County Drug Prevention Coalition
Jenkins Memorial Children's Center and Industries, Inc.
LULAC Council #761
McGehee Desha Alumni Community Center, Inc.
Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center
OMNI Center for Peace, Justice and Ecology
Ozark Headwaters Group of the Sierra Club
Phi Iota Alpha
Sierra Club, Arkansas State Chapter
Southeast Regional Council
Southwest Arkansas Good Government Commission
Stamps Citizens in Action
Stonewall Democratic Caucus of Arkansas
White River EPA
Wilmot Concerned Citizens
Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)
Women's Project

ARKANSAS CITIZENS FIRST CONGRESS

TEN PRIORITIES FOR A BETTER ARKANSAS

- Increased resources for rural and small business economic development.
- Enact the recommendations of the HIV/AIDS Task Force.
- Progressive tax reform to provide low and middle income tax relief while generating sufficient state revenue.
- Enact the recommendations of the Global Warming Commission.
- Create an Arkansas Civil Rights Commission.
- Close the education achievement gap.
- Enact the Dream Act to make sure every student graduating from an Arkansas school has the opportunity to pay in-state college tuition.
- Create a Task Force on Arkansas Water Resources.
- Increase penalties for and enforcement of wage theft.
- Expand state incentives for land conservation.

Citizens First Congress Steering Committee

Kate Althoff • Kenneth Anderson • Rick Collins • Daniel Diaz • Debbie Doss
Rafael Garcia • Earnest Nash • Ines Polonius • Randi Romo • Anthony Scott
Regina Von Tungeln • Kathy Wesho-Bauer • Kara Wilkins

The Citizens First Congress is a grassroots coalition of over 40 groups from across Arkansas

Find out more at CitizensFirst.org



1308 West Second Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

501.376.7913
Congress@CitizensFirst.org