

Chalkboard

By

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It's an outdated, overworked expression but I still like it- "Sometimes it's hard to drain the swamp when you are up to your knees in alligators." Does that sentiment ever describe you? You know there are important things you should be doing but cannot find the time to do them because of the other not so important but necessary things you are doing.

One important thing that I have not seemed to find time to do has been the act of keeping up with the happenings of the *Arkansas 86th General Assembly*. Understand that I am really saying that it the legislators' work that is important rather than my keeping up with it.

Obviously my efforts to keep up have to do with how various changes to law might affect the Gentry Public School District. When I went on-line at 4:00 a.m. this morning at the General Assembly's website, at <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/>, I found that the members of the House of Representatives have filed 323 bills and that the Senate has filed 192. That seems fairly prolific for having been in session about three weeks.

I encourage you to visit the above site and review the work of your elected officials. The site is very user friendly. You may find that while some of the bills have to do with draining the swamp, many are aimed at combating alligators. If you have followed the Assembly's work over the years you will not be surprised to find many of the same themes even if some of the faces are different. Some types of alligators seem indigenous to the state- taxes, education, health and welfare and so forth. Others are somewhat arcane.

Being a former teacher, albeit three decades ago, I have proposed a short list of 10 questions to help you review proposed legislation. All the questions presuppose the passage of one of the 515 bills now being proposed for law. You may find the answers at the above website. Even if you do not find all the answers, you might find a bill title that catches your eye. Now for the questions...

1. What is the criminal penalty for abusing your cat?
2. What is the appropriation for AETN for the next biennium?
3. Can you attend the ceremony if and when a public building is named after you?
4. What dollar amount triggers the need for take bids in rural fire districts?
5. May a reserve police officer issue a citation at the scene of a traffic incident?
- 6.

What constitutes disorderly conduct by an adult on a school campus? 7. What practice does the following describe- “Mobilization/manipulation” means a manual therapy technique composed of a continuum of skilled passive movement to the joints or to soft tissue related to joints, or both that are applied at varying speeds and amplitudes, including without limitation, a small-amplitude/high-velocity therapeutic movement...”? 8. In which month would Thomas Paine Day be celebrated? 9. How many bills deal with reducing taxes? 10. What is the underlying push behind all the retirement bills?

Next week I will begin sharing with you the results of the public Zone meetings conducted by the Gentry school board and Arkansas Leadership Academy. If you have been reading, you know these efforts have been about gathering our community’s core beliefs about education in Gentry, also “some pretty important stuff”.