

Arkansas lawmakers have advanced a bill that would prohibit employers from requiring workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Members of the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor committee today (Fri) voted unanimously to advance Senate Bill 732, sponsored by Republican Sen. Blake Johnson of Corning. Johnson said his bill would allow people to refuse COVID-19 vaccines as a condition of employment or education for two reasons.

News01

0:25

“...would get unemployment.”

Johnson amended his bill to include other sources of funding for unemployment payments to people who get fired for not complying with a vaccine mandate. But UA Little Rock law professor Josh Silverstein (STINE not steen) says the proposal runs counter to traditional conservative ideals of limited government involvement in private businesses.

News02

0:24

“...of private enterprise.”

The bill passed on a voice vote and now goes to the full Senate for a vote. This comes as lawmakers are meeting to re-draw the state’s four U-S Congressional districts, though the legislature adjourned for the weekend without taking action on any proposed district maps.

State lawmakers have given initial approval to a bill that would prohibit businesses from requiring their employees to be vaccinated against the coronavirus. The Arkansas Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor committee approved Senate Bill 732, sponsored by Republican Sen. Blake Johnson of Corning, in a meeting today (Fri). Speaking against the bill, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce president Randy Zook (like look), said it would be government overreach.

News03

0:17

“...by their employees.”

But Republican Sen. Kim Hammer of Benton said, on the other hand, businesses are treated better than people who are against getting vaccinated for one reason or another.

News04

0:22

“...should be doing.”

The bill would also provide unemployment payments to people who are fired for not complying with a COVID-19 vaccine mandate. It now goes to the full Senate for a vote.