EXHIBIT B1

MINUTES
SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY
Meeting Jointly
Tuesday, August 25, 2026
1:30 PM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Alan Clark, Chair; Blake Johnson, Matt McKee, Terry Rice, Brad Simon, and Clarke Tucker; Representatives Carol Dalby, Chair; Kendon Underwood, Vice Chair; Howard M. Beaty, Jr., Andrew Collins, Jimmy Gazaway, Justin Gonzales, Tippi McCullough, Jeremiah Moore, Shad Pearce, and Joy Springer

Other members present: Senators Bart Hester, Mark Johnson, Bryan King, Reginald Murdock, Matt Stone, Jamie Scott, and Dan Sullivan; Representatives Lincoln Barnett, Nick Burkes, Cameron Cooper, James Eaton, Denise Ennett, Kenneth B. Ferguson, Denise Garner, Diana Gonzales Worthen, Steve Hollowell, Jack Ladyman, John Maddox, Richard McGrew, Aaron Pilkington, David Ray, Jay Richardson, Johnny Rye, Tara Shephard, and Bill Teeter

Senator Clark called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve September 30, 2025, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit C]
Senator Rice made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Senator Blake Johnson, and the motion carried.

Consideration to Approve December 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit D]
Senator Rice made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Senator Blake Johnson, and the motion carried.

Discussion of Prison Beds in Arkansas [Exhibits E1-E3]
Lee Watson and Dr. William "Dubs" Byers expressed a need for more prison beds, re-entry programs and skills training for inmates. Scott Sawyer, Sheriff, Polk County; Mike Knoedl, Sheriff, Dallas County; Shawn Holloway, Sherriff, Benton County; and Taylor Handford, Legal Counsel, Association of Arkansas Counties; discussed the present overcrowding in county jails, future overflow projections, and the difficulty in choosing which inmates should be released due to lack of space.

Kaleem Nazeem, Co-Director, DecARcerate, and Sarah Moore, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Arkansas Justice Reform Coalition, argued against the need for more prison beds, advocating for changes in policies including the reduction of long sentences, increased use of the Emergency Powers Act, and release of inmates on their transfer eligibility date.

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Bob McMahan, Prosecutor Coordinator, Office of the Prosecutor Coordinator; Tom Tatum, Elected Prosecuting Attorney, 15th Judicial District; and David Ethredge, Elected Prosecuting Attorney, 14th Judicial District; stated that they believe that more prison beds are needed for justice to be served. Lindsey Wallace, Secretary, Department of Corrections (DOC); Dexter Payne, Director, Division of Correction, DOC; and Elaine Lee, Director, Arkansas Sentencing Commission, DOC; provided information on the number of inmates staying past their transfer eligibility dates and the number of inmates released with the Emergency Powers Act, and they also defined the concept of the controlling release eligibility date.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

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