



**March 9, 2022**

Dear CFC Members,

It is hard to believe that over one year has passed since the last CFC Convention. We would like to announce our **virtual 2022 CFC Convention June 24-26 on Zoom**. The convention is your chance to give your input and help determine the CFC's priorities for 2022-2023.

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress will continue to meet to provide training to our membership and to help you develop strong campaigns around various issues that will be presented at this year's convention. We are also available to provide training to your group or organization upon request. We would like to invite you to **renew your membership today through May 2, 2022** so that your organization will have a place at the table in helping us elect our 2022-2023 CFC platform.

We hope you will continue to stand with other organizations like yours from across Arkansas in our fight for policy reforms that will improve our state. In this packet, you'll find all the information you need to renew your membership including:

- **CFC Membership Information**
- **CFC Membership Form**
- **CFC General Information**

We look forward to our continued partnership with you as we fight to make Arkansas a better place to live for ALL Arkansans. You can submit the membership form along with your payment online at [www.citizensfirst.org/membership](http://www.citizensfirst.org/membership), or print and mail your form and payment to our office at 1308 W. 2nd Street, Little Rock, AR 72116 by May 2, 2022. Please do not hesitate to contact Kymara Seals, our Policy Director, with any questions you might have.

Thank you so much for your continued support!

**William El-Amin**

Co-Chair, Arkansas Citizens First Congress

**Scharmél Roussel**

Co-Chair, Arkansas Citizens First Congress

**Kymara Seals, Policy Director**

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@CitizensFirstCongress

(501) 376-7913  
1308 W. 2nd Street, Little Rock  
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# BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE CITIZENS FIRST CONGRESS

## ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

**Purpose:** The CFC is a coalition of grassroots and community organizations working in Arkansas.

**Approval:** Member organizations must have at least 10 members, complete a membership application, and be approved by the CFC Steering Committee before each convention.

**Approval Process:** Upon receiving applications for membership the CFC staff will make contact with the member organization seeking approval within 24 hours to confirm the receiving of the application. Staff will review the application process with the member organization. This correspondence should be made via email and follow-up with a phone call thanking the organization for their interest in the CFC.

All member applications that are received will be submitted to the CFC Steering Committee for review at the next Steering Committee meeting. If the next Steering Committee meeting is more than 30 days away, staff will submit an application via email to the Steering Committee.

Upon approval, member organizations shall be contacted within the next three business days and notified of their acceptance into the Citizens First Congress. At that time any unpaid dues will be required to be paid in full.

**Membership Fees:** Member organizations must pay an annual membership fee that will be established by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee can waive or reduce fees depending upon circumstances.

**Responsibilities:** Each member organization must designate a member to coordinate with the CFC for lobbying efforts in their organization such as activating phone trees, planning lobbying workshops, etc.

## INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

**Purpose:** The purpose of individual membership is to empower people who might not belong to one or more of the group membership organizations but who still want to make a difference in their communities and around Arkansas.

**Approval:** Individual members shall complete a membership application and be approved by the CFC Steering Committee before each convention.

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# BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE CITIZENS FIRST CONGRESS

**Approval Process:** Upon receiving applications for membership the CFC staff will make contact with the individual seeking approval within 24 hours to confirm the receiving of the application. Staff will review the application process with the individual. This correspondence should be made via email and follow up with a phone call thanking the organization for their interest in the CFC.

All member applications that are received will be submitted to the CFC Steering Committee for review by the next Steering Committee meeting. If the next Steering Committee meeting is more than 30 days away staff will submit an application via email to the Steering Committee.

Upon approval the individual shall be contacted within the next three business days and notified of their acceptance into the Citizens First Congress. At that time any unpaid dues will be required to be paid in full.

**Membership Fees:** Individual members must pay an annual membership fee that will be established by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee can waive or reduce fees depending upon circumstances.

**Voting:** Individual members shall not have voting privileges at CFC Conventions.

**Committee Participation:** Individual members may serve on Structural Committees.

## **MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

### **Member Organizations**

- Partnership with a larger advocacy coalition
- Advocacy training for your organization
- Legislative updates from the Arkansas State Capitol
- Representation and voting privileges at the Arkansas Citizens First Congress Bi-Annual Conference
- Bill tracking during the General Assembly

### **Individual Membership**

- Legislative updates from the Arkansas State Capitol
- Up-to-date information on the issues that you are concerned about
- Learn how to advocate for issues
- Election updates
- Bill tracking during the General Assembly



## 2022 MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Please check which member/fee category your group fits in:**

- 10-19 Members: \$50 (Membership includes 2 delegates to the CFC Convention.)
- 20-29 Members: \$100 (Membership includes 3 delegates to the CFC Convention.)
- 30 or More Members: \$150 (Membership includes 4 delegates to the CFC Convention.)

**Organization name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact person(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Media Pages:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to **Arkansas Citizens First Congress****

**Mail to:** Arkansas Citizens First Congress, 1308 West 2nd Street, Little Rock, AR 72201

**Online payment available at:** [www.citizensfirst.org/membership](http://www.citizensfirst.org/membership)

## • OUR VALUES

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress believes in the power of grassroots organizations to expand opportunities and improve the quality of life for everyone in Arkansas. The CFC values a representative government that is transparent, accountable, responsive, and inclusive.

## • OUR VISION

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress envisions a united community working together on many interconnected issues to ensure fairness and expand opportunities in a policy-making process where the voices of all Arkansans are heard.

## • OUR MISSION

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress is a coalition of grassroots communities and allies working together to establish a strong public voice to influence political and policy decisions and ensure accountability.

## WHO WE ARE

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress is a multi-issue and non-partisan coalition of organizations who work together for progressive changes in state policy.

Coalition groups come from all corners of the state and work on many different issues. At the Arkansas Legislature, the coalition members lobby together on a common agenda. They also watchdog the legislature, and lobby against threats to progressive policy.

The Arkansas Citizens First Congress has lobbied lawmakers at the Arkansas Legislature since 1999.

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## HOW THE CFC CHOOSES ITS 10 PRIORITIES

The CFC has four issue caucuses that meet between legislative sessions to develop strategies, discuss issues and build agendas on **Economic Justice, Education Reform, Civil Rights and Election Reform, and the Environment.**

Delegates from CFC member groups attend a convention before the legislative session where they present the issues they want the CFC to endorse. These issues are considered, discussed, and debated. The delegates then vote to elect a broad platform of issues and a priority platform of the 10 items that become our top priorities for the upcoming session.



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## 2021-22 PRIORITIES FOR A BETTER ARKANSAS

- 1** Implement the new **Arkansas State Water Plan** and protect water quantity, quality and aquatic environments.
- 2** Support **quality public education** with research proven education reforms such as pre-K, discipline reform, quality after-school and summer programs.
- 3** Defend the integrity of the **state budget** through continued funding of the Arkansas Works Program and fighting tax cuts that benefit the wealthy and corporations.
- 4** Address **climate change** by expanding energy efficiency and renewable energy reforms that reduce carbon pollution, save consumers money and create jobs.
- 5** Reform the **criminal justice system** to create more rehabilitation pathways for juvenile and nonviolent offenders, and reduce fines and fees that disproportionately impact the economic well-being of families of color and low-income families.
- 6** Improve **minimum housing standards** to protect Arkansas tenants by requiring proof of habitability for rental properties, and ensure tenants cannot be arrested for failure to pay rent.
- 7** Pass an **Arkansas Earned Income Tax Credit** to support low-income working families' efforts to combat poverty.
- 8** Pass an **Arkansas Dark Skies Act** that increases the use of shielded outdoor lighting to reduce light pollution and increase energy efficiency.



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