

## **Proclamation to Declare a State of Emergency in Arkansas**

WHEREAS: On March 31, 2023, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes struck Arkansas and continue to cause dangers, hardships, and suffering throughout the state, which in turn, warrants this executive action;

WHEREAS: Great hardship has fallen upon citizens and businesses in Arkansas, as well as public and private properties throughout the state;

WHEREAS: The weather-related damage from this event has created the need for commercial vehicles to haul heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment to line crews for the purpose of restoring power to the citizens of the State of Arkansas;

WHEREAS: There are numerous downed power lines, and it is important to maintain a safe distance from downed power lines and from the line crews and equipment restoring power to the citizens of the State of Arkansas; and

WHEREAS: Pursuant to 49 CFR §390.23, the Governor is authorized to declare a regional emergency for the duration of emergency conditions, not to exceed thirty (30) days from the date of the initial declaration of emergency, and any motor carrier or driver operating a commercial vehicle to provide emergency relief is temporarily exempt from the regulations found in 49 CFR §390 to §399 for the duration of the declared emergency.

NOW THEREFORE, I, SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS, acting under the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Arkansas and pursuant to Act 511 of 1973, as amended, do hereby declare that a state of emergency exists in the State of Arkansas as applied to commercial vehicles hauling heavy equipment, oversized loads, transformers, necessary hardware, and other transmission and distribution equipment to line crews for the purpose of restoring power to the citizens of the State.

FURTHERMORE: I do hereby declare that a state of emergency exists in the State of Arkansas as applied to emergency response vehicles such as, but not limited to, utility vehicles, bucket trucks, and electric utility supply trucks responding to the storms and related damage. These emergency response vehicles are authorized to bypass all Arkansas Department of Transportation weigh station facilities through April 5, 2023. This authorization does not include vehicles that require permits to operate on Arkansas' roadways. This authorization does not relieve size and weight restrictions. This declaration only applies to weigh stations and to vehicles traveling in convoy.

FURTHERMORE: I, hereby invoke the emergency executive powers vested in me under Ark. Code Ann. §§12-75-101 et seq., as amended, and suspend all provisions of regulating statutes prescribing procedures for the conduct of the Office of State Procurement, the Arkansas Building Authority, the State Office of Personnel Management, and all other State departments and agencies to render maximum assistance to the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment and the Arkansas Department Public Safety, through the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management, relative to the removal of any potential impediment to the rapid and orderly remediation of the disposal site and to rendering of assistance to political subdivisions.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed on this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March, in the year of our Lord 2023.

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