



Mississippi State Senate

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MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

DATE: MAY 1, 2025

Enclosed is a summary of general bills which were enacted during the 2025 Regular Legislative Session. Should any bill in which you are interested not appear or should you wish to have a more complete explanation of any measure, please let us know.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL LEGISLATION

2025 REGULAR SESSION

**Prepared by
Senate Legislative Services Office**

MAY 1, 2025

VETOED BILLS

The following general bills from the 2025 Regular Session have been vetoed by Governor Reeves as of April 25, 2025:

SB 2386. Vetoed 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-115, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO MAKE CERTAIN TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE PROVISIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY AND TO MODIFY AGE AND INCOME AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO REFLECT THE CURRENT CRITERIA; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF MEDICAID TO SUBMIT A WAIVER BY JULY 1, 2025, TO THE CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO CONDUCT LESS FREQUENT MEDICAL REDETERMINATIONS FOR ELIGIBLE CHILDREN WHO HAVE CERTAIN LONG-TERM OR CHRONIC CONDITIONS THAT DO NOT NEED TO BE REIDENTIFIED EVERY YEAR; TO PROVIDE THAT MEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE ARE ELIGIBLE UNDER THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM; TO CONFORM WITH FEDERAL LAW TO ALLOW CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE TO BE ELIGIBLE UNTIL THEIR 26TH BIRTHDAY; TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE DIVISION MUST APPLY TO CMS FOR WAIVERS TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE END-STAGE RENAL DISEASE PATIENTS ON DIALYSIS, CANCER PATIENTS ON CHEMOTHERAPY OR ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS ON ANTIREJECTION DRUGS; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-117, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED BY HOUSE BILL NO. 1401, 2025 REGULAR SESSION, TO MAKE CERTAIN TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE PROVISIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR MEDICAID SERVICES TO COMPLY WITH FEDERAL LAW; TO ELIMINATE THE OPTION FOR CERTAIN RURAL HOSPITALS TO ELECT AGAINST REIMBURSEMENT FOR OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES USING THE AMBULATORY PAYMENT CLASSIFICATION (APC) METHODOLOGY; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO UPDATE THE CASE-MIX PAYMENT SYSTEM AND FAIR RENTAL REIMBURSEMENT SYSTEM AS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO IMPLEMENT A QUALITY OR VALUE-BASED COMPONENT TO THE NURSING FACILITY PAYMENT SYSTEM; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE PEDIATRICIANS FOR CERTAIN PRIMARY CARE SERVICES AS DEFINED BY THE DIVISION AT 100% OF THE RATE ESTABLISHED UNDER MEDICARE; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR ONE PAIR OF EYEGLASSES EVERY TWO YEARS INSTEAD OF EVERY FIVE YEARS FOR CERTAIN BENEFICIARIES; TO AUTHORIZE ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES TO BE PRESCRIBED AND DISPENSED IN TWELVE-MONTH SUPPLY INCREMENTS UNDER FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE AMBULATORY SURGICAL CARE (ASC) BASED ON 90% OF THE MEDICARE ASC PAYMENT SYSTEM RATE IN EFFECT JULY 1 OF EACH YEAR AS SET BY CMS; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT FOR DEVICES USED FOR THE REDUCTION OF SNORING AND OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA; TO PROVIDE THAT NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1, 2025, THE DIVISION

SHALL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MISSISSIPPI HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, THE MISSISSIPPI HEALTHCARE COLLABORATIVE, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER AND ANY OTHER HOSPITALS IN THE STATE, PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CHAIRMEN OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE MEDICAID COMMITTEES ON METHODS FOR ALLOWING PHYSICIANS OR OTHER ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS EMPLOYED OR CONTRACTED AT ANY HOSPITAL IN THE STATE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEDICARE UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS (UPL) PROGRAM, ALLOWABLE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR PROVIDER PAYMENT INITIATIVE ESTABLISHED BY THE DIVISION, SUBJECT TO FEDERAL LIMITATIONS ON COLLECTION OF PROVIDER TAXES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION SHALL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MISSISSIPPI HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, THE MISSISSIPPI HEALTHCARE COLLABORATIVE, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER AND ANY OTHER HOSPITALS IN THE STATE, STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF OFFERING ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL CLAIMS AND SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES AND TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF THE DIVISION ESTABLISHING A MEDICARE UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS PROGRAM TO PHYSICIANS EMPLOYED OR CONTRACTED BY HOSPITALS WHO ARE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM THROUGH AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TRANSFER; TO UPDATE AND CLARIFY LANGUAGE ABOUT THE DIVISION'S TRANSITION FROM THE MEDICARE UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS (UPL) PROGRAM TO THE MISSISSIPPI HOSPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM (MHAP); TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION SHALL MAXIMIZE TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING FOR MHAP, UPL AND OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT PROGRAMS IN EFFECT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND SHALL NOT CHANGE THE METHODOLOGIES, FORMULAS, MODELS OR PREPRINTS USED TO CALCULATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS TO HOSPITALS FROM THOSE METHODOLOGIES, FORMULAS, MODELS OR PREPRINTS IN EFFECT AND AS APPROVED BY THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO CONTRACT WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PROVIDE FOR A PERINATAL HIGH RISK MANAGEMENT/INFANT SERVICES SYSTEM FOR ANY ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARY WHO CANNOT RECEIVE SUCH SERVICES UNDER A DIFFERENT PROGRAM; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR SERVICES AT CERTIFIED COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTERS; TO EXTEND TO JULY 1, 2027, THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON THE PROVISION OF LAW THAT PROVIDES THAT THE DIVISION SHALL REIMBURSE FOR OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE AGE OF 21 YEARS BY BORDER CITY UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED PEDIATRIC TEACHING HOSPITALS, WHICH WAS REPEALED BY OPERATION OF LAW IN 2024; TO LIMIT THE PAYMENT FOR PROVIDING SERVICES TO MISSISSIPPI MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE AGE OF 21 YEARS WHO ARE TREATED BY A BORDER CITY UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED PEDIATRIC TEACHING HOSPITAL; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A METHOD FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER SERVICES BASED ON A CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR BEST PRACTICES IN MEDICALLY NECESSARY EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATIONS; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR UNITED STATES FOOD AND

DRUG ADMINISTRATION APPROVED MEDICATIONS FOR CHRONIC WEIGHT MANAGEMENT OR FOR ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS IN THE DISCRETION OF THE MEDICAL PROVIDER; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO PROVIDE COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANY NONSTATIN MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION THAT HAS A UNIQUE INDICATION TO REDUCE THE RISK OF A MAJOR CARDIOVASCULAR EVENT IN PRIMARY PREVENTION AND SECONDARY PREVENTION PATIENTS; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO PROVIDE COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANY NONOPIOID MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TREATMENT OR MANAGEMENT OF PAIN; TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF NOTICE THE DIVISION MUST PROVIDE THE MEDICAID COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR PROPOSED RATE CHANGES AND TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH LEGISLATIVE NOTICE MAY BE EXPEDITED; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT, TRIAGE OR TREATMENT FOR ELIGIBLE MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES; TO SET CERTAIN REIMBURSEMENT LEVELS FOR SUCH PROVIDERS; TO EXTEND TO JULY 1, 2029, THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON SUCH SECTION; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-121, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO EXTEND ITS MEDICAID ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND FISCAL AGENT SERVICES, INCLUDING ALL RELATED COMPONENTS AND SERVICES, CONTRACTS IN EFFECT ON JUNE 30, 2025, FOR AN ADDITIONAL TWO-YEAR PERIOD; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO ENTER INTO A TWO-YEAR CONTRACT WITH A VENDOR TO PROVIDE SUPPORT OF THE DIVISION'S ELIGIBILITY SYSTEM; TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF NOTICE THE DIVISION MUST PROVIDE THE MEDICAID COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR A PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENT AND TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH LEGISLATIVE NOTICE MAY BE EXPEDITED; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-305, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT WHEN A THIRD-PARTY PAYOR REQUIRES PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR AN ITEM OR SERVICE FURNISHED TO A MEDICAID RECIPIENT, THE PAYOR SHALL ACCEPT AUTHORIZATION PROVIDED BY THE DIVISION OF MEDICAID THAT THE ITEM OR SERVICE IS COVERED UNDER THE STATE PLAN AS IF SUCH AUTHORIZATION WERE THE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION MADE BY THE THIRD-PARTY PAYOR FOR SUCH ITEM OR SERVICE; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-117.7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION SHALL NOT REIMBURSE OR PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR GENDER TRANSITION PROCEDURES FOR ANY PERSON; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-145, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT A QUARTERLY HOSPITAL ASSESSMENT MAY EXCEED THE ASSESSMENT IN THE PRIOR QUARTER BY MORE THAN \$3,750,000.00 IF SUCH INCREASE IS TO MAXIMIZE FEDERAL FUNDS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO REIMBURSE HOSPITALS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER NEW PROGRAMS FOR HOSPITALS, FOR INCREASED SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT PROGRAMS FOR HOSPITALS OR TO ASSIST WITH STATE-MATCHING FUNDS AS AUTHORIZED BY THE LEGISLATURE; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE THE PORTION OF THE HOSPITAL ASSESSMENT APPLICABLE TO LONG-TERM ACUTE CARE HOSPITALS AND REHABILITATION HOSPITALS IF CMS WAIVES CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DEFINE TERMS; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE STATE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DEVELOP AND PROMULGATE WRITTEN EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND INFORMATION FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS ABOUT MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS; TO REQUIRE HOSPITALS PROVIDING BIRTH SERVICES TO PROVIDE SUCH EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO NEW PARENTS AND, AS APPROPRIATE, OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS; TO REQUIRE THAT SUCH MATERIALS BE PROVIDED TO ANY WOMAN WHO PRESENTS WITH SIGNS OF A MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE ANY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OR NURSE MIDWIFE WHO RENDERS POSTNATAL CARE OR PEDIATRIC INFANT CARE TO ENSURE THAT THE POSTNATAL CARE PATIENT OR BIRTHING MOTHER OF THE PEDIATRIC INFANT CARE PATIENT, AS APPLICABLE, IS OFFERED SCREENING FOR POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE REFERRALS IF SUCH PATIENT OR MOTHER IS DEEMED LIKELY TO BE SUFFERING FROM POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-107, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO ESTABLISH A MEDICAID ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND BENEFICIARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS; TO PROVIDE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SERVING ON JANUARY 1, 2025, SHALL BE SELECTED TO SERVE ON THE MEDICAID ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AND SUCH MEMBERS SHALL SERVE UNTIL JULY 1, 2028; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

SB 2573. Vetoed 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO CREATE THE "MISSISSIPPI TOURISM REORGANIZATION ACT"; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM; TO REQUIRE THE GOVERNOR TO APPOINT, WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE, AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM; TO PRESCRIBE THE GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM TO ESTABLISH A PROGRAM OF GRANTS TO BE MATCHED BY TOURISM ENTITIES IN THE STATE; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM TO SELL ADVERTISING AND OTHER TOURISM PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION AND TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM ADVERTISING FUND; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI TOURISM ASSOCIATION MARKETING ADVISORY BOARD TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND THE STATE PERSONNEL BOARD SHALL HAVE THE POWERS NECESSARY IN CARRYING OUT THE CREATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM REQUIRED BY THIS ACT; TO AMEND SECTION 27-65-75, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED BY HOUSE BILL NO. 1, 2025 REGULAR SESSION, TO DIVERT A PORTION OF SALES TAX REVENUE COLLECTED FROM RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM ADVERTISING FUND INSTEAD OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TOURISM FUND; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-59, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WITH RESPECT TO TOURISM; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-60,

MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH AUTHORIZES THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO ESTABLISH A PROGRAM OF GRANTS TO FINANCE, PROMOTE AND ADVERTISE LOCAL TOURIST ATTRACTIONS; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-61, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS OF THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM DIVISION OF THE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL BOARD TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-63, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE TRANSFER OF POWERS AND DUTIES OF STATE AGENCIES RELATING TO TOURISM TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-64, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH AUTHORIZES THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO SELL ADVERTISING AND OTHER TOURISM INFORMATION AND CREATES THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TOURISM ADVERTISING FUND; TO REPEAL SECTION 57-1-64.1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH CREATES THE MISSISSIPPI TOURISM ASSOCIATION MARKETING ADVISORY BOARD TO ASSIST THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

SB 2840. Vetoed 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-113-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT MONIES IN THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY VETERINARY SCHOOL FUND SHALL BE DISBURSED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING INSTEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION; TO AMEND SECTION 43 OF CHAPTER 95, LAWS OF 2024, TO REVISE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE THAT A CERTAIN SUM MAY BE USED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL SAFETY PLATFORM; TO AMEND SECTION 1 OF CHAPTER 534, LAWS OF 2024, TO CORRECT THE REFERENCE TO THE FUND NUMBER FOR THE 2022 EMERGENCY ROAD AND BRIDGE FUND; TO AMEND SECTION 29-9-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT PURCHASES OF OBSOLETE PERSONAL PROPERTY SOLD BY THE LEGISLATURE ARE NOT VIOLATIONS OF THE ETHICS LAWS; TO DIRECT THE TRANSFER OF CERTAIN FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER TO TRANSFER CERTAIN FUNDS TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FISCAL YEAR 2026; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER CERTAIN FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND TO THE MISSISSIPPI SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION FUND; TO CREATE THE "MISSISSIPPI VETERAN'S HOME IMPROVEMENT FUND" WITHIN THE STATE TREASURY; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER CERTAIN FUNDS TO THE "MISSISSIPPI VETERAN'S HOME IMPROVEMENT FUND"; TO CREATE THE "UNITED STATES FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY SETTLEMENT FUND" WITHIN THE STATE TREASURY; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CONTINGENT FUND TO THE "UNITED STATES FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY SETTLEMENT FUND"; TO DIRECT THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND DFA TO THE 2022

IHL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER A CERTAIN SUM FROM THE MARCH 2023 STORM HOUSING MISSION FUND TO THE HAZARD MITIGATION ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT FUND; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER THE REMAINING BALANCE OF THE MARCH 2023 STORM HOUSING MISSION FUND TO THE DISASTER ASSISTANCE TRUST FUND; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER A CERTAIN SUM FROM THE CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND TO THE DISASTER ASSISTANCE TRUST FUND; TO REPEAL SECTION 33-15-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH IS THE PROVISION OF LAW CREATING THE MARCH 2023 STORM HOUSING MISSION FUND; TO CREATE THE "DBCF CIVIL MONEY PENALTY FUND"; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER A CERTAIN SUM FROM THE CONSUMER FINANCE FUND TO THE "DBCF CIVIL MONEY PENALTY FUND"; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER A CERTAIN SUM TO THE NG911 CMRS GRANT FUND; TO DIRECT THE STATE TREASURER TO TRANSFER A CERTAIN SUM TO THE STATE NG911 FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

SB 2867. Vetoed 3/27/25.

Veto Referred to Medicaid 3/28/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-115, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO MAKE CERTAIN TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE PROVISIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY AND TO MODIFY AGE AND INCOME AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO REFLECT THE CURRENT CRITERIA; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF MEDICAID TO SUBMIT A WAIVER BY JULY 1, 2025, TO THE CENTER FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO CONDUCT LESS FREQUENT MEDICAL REDETERMINATIONS FOR ELIGIBLE CHILDREN WHO HAVE CERTAIN LONG-TERM OR CHRONIC CONDITIONS THAT DO NOT NEED TO BE REIDENTIFIED EVERY YEAR; TO PROVIDE THAT MEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE ARE ELIGIBLE UNDER THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM; TO CONFORM WITH FEDERAL LAW TO ALLOW CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE TO BE ELIGIBLE UNTIL THEIR 26TH BIRTHDAY; TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE DIVISION MUST APPLY TO CMS FOR WAIVERS TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE END STAGE RENAL DISEASE PATIENTS ON DIALYSIS, CANCER PATIENTS ON CHEMOTHERAPY OR ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS ON ANTIREJECTION DRUGS; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-117, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO MAKE CERTAIN TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO THE PROVISIONS THAT PROVIDE FOR MEDICAID SERVICES TO COMPLY WITH FEDERAL LAW; TO ELIMINATE THE OPTION FOR CERTAIN RURAL HOSPITALS TO ELECT AGAINST REIMBURSEMENT FOR OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES USING THE AMBULATORY PAYMENT CLASSIFICATION (APC) METHODOLOGY; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO UPDATE THE CASE-MIX PAYMENT SYSTEM AND FAIR RENTAL REIMBURSEMENT SYSTEM AS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO IMPLEMENT A QUALITY OR VALUE-BASED COMPONENT TO THE NURSING FACILITY PAYMENT SYSTEM; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE PEDIATRICIANS FOR CERTAIN PRIMARY CARE SERVICES AS DEFINED BY THE DIVISION AT 100% OF THE RATE ESTABLISHED UNDER

MEDICARE; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR ONE PAIR OF EYEGLASSES EVERY TWO YEARS INSTEAD OF EVERY FIVE YEARS FOR CERTAIN BENEFICIARIES; TO AUTHORIZE ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES TO BE PRESCRIBED AND DISPENSED IN TWELVE-MONTH SUPPLY INCREMENTS UNDER FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE AMBULATORY SURGICAL CARE (ASC) BASED ON 90% OF THE MEDICARE ASC PAYMENT SYSTEM RATE IN EFFECT JULY 1 OF EACH YEAR AS SET BY CMS; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT FOR DEVICES USED FOR THE REDUCTION OF SNORING AND OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA; TO DIRECT THE DIVISION TO ALLOW PHYSICIANS AT ANY HOSPITAL TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEDICARE UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS PROGRAM (UPL), ALLOWABLE DELIVERY SYSTEM OR PROVIDER PAYMENT INITIATIVE ESTABLISHED BY THE DIVISION, SUBJECT TO FEDERAL LIMITATIONS ON COLLECTION OF PROVIDER TAXES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION MAY, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MISSISSIPPI HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL CLAIMS AND SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES; TO UPDATE AND CLARIFY LANGUAGE ABOUT THE DIVISION'S TRANSITION FROM THE MEDICARE UPPER PAYMENT LIMITS PROGRAM (UPL) TO THE MISSISSIPPI HOSPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM (MHAP); TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION SHALL MAXIMIZE TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING FOR MHAP, UPL AND OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT PROGRAMS IN EFFECT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND SHALL NOT CHANGE THE METHODOLOGIES, FORMULAS, MODELS OR PREPRINTS USED TO CALCULATE THE DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS TO HOSPITALS FROM THOSE METHODOLOGIES, FORMULAS, MODELS OR PREPRINTS IN EFFECT AND AS APPROVED BY THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO CONTRACT WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PROVIDE FOR A PERINATAL HIGH RISK MANAGEMENT/INFANT SERVICES SYSTEM FOR ANY ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARY THAT CANNOT RECEIVE SUCH SERVICES UNDER A DIFFERENT PROGRAM; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR SERVICES AT CERTIFIED COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTERS; TO EXTEND TO JULY 1, 2027, THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON THE PROVISION OF LAW THAT PROVIDES THAT THE DIVISION SHALL REIMBURSE FOR OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE YEARS BY BORDER CITY UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED PEDIATRIC TEACHING HOSPITALS, WHICH WAS REPEALED BY OPERATION OF LAW IN 2024; TO LIMIT THE PAYMENT FOR PROVIDING SERVICES TO MISSISSIPPI MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE YEARS WHO ARE TREATED BY A BORDER CITY UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED PEDIATRIC TEACHING HOSPITAL; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A METHOD FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER SERVICES BASED ON A CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR BEST PRACTICES IN MEDICALLY NECESSARY EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATIONS; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE FOR UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION APPROVED MEDICATIONS FOR CHRONIC WEIGHT MANAGEMENT OR FOR ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS IN THE DISCRETION OF THE MEDICAL PROVIDER; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION

TO PROVIDE COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANY NONSTATIN MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION THAT HAS A UNIQUE INDICATION TO REDUCE THE RISK OF A MAJOR CARDIOVASCULAR EVENT IN PRIMARY PREVENTION AND SECONDARY PREVENTION PATIENTS; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO PROVIDE COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR ANY NONOPIOID MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TREATMENT OR MANAGEMENT OF PAIN; TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF NOTICE THE DIVISION MUST PROVIDE THE MEDICAID COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR PROPOSED RATE CHANGES AND TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH LEGISLATIVE NOTICE MAY BE EXPEDITED; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION TO REIMBURSE AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT, TRIAGE OR TREATMENT FOR ELIGIBLE MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES; TO SET CERTAIN REIMBURSEMENT LEVELS FOR SUCH PROVIDERS; TO EXTEND TO JULY 1, 2029, THE DATE OF THE REPEALER ON SUCH SECTION; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-121, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO EXTEND ITS MEDICAID ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND FISCAL AGENT SERVICES, INCLUDING ALL RELATED COMPONENTS AND SERVICES, CONTRACTS IN EFFECT ON JUNE 30, 2025, FOR ADDITIONAL FIVE-YEAR PERIODS IF THE SYSTEM CONTINUES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE, THE ANNUAL COST CONTINUES TO BE A FAIR MARKET VALUE, AND THE RATE OF INCREASE IS NO MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OR THE CURRENT CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, WHICHEVER IS LESS; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO ENTER INTO A TWO-YEAR CONTRACT WITH A VENDOR TO PROVIDE SUPPORT OF THE DIVISION'S ELIGIBILITY SYSTEM; TO REDUCE THE LENGTH OF NOTICE THE DIVISION MUST PROVIDE THE MEDICAID COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN FOR A PROPOSED STATE PLAN AMENDMENT AND TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH LEGISLATIVE NOTICE MAY BE EXPEDITED; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-305, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT WHEN A THIRD PARTY PAYOR REQUIRES PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR AN ITEM OR SERVICE FURNISHED TO A MEDICAID RECIPIENT, THE PAYOR SHALL ACCEPT AUTHORIZATION PROVIDED BY THE DIVISION OF MEDICAID THAT THE ITEM OR SERVICE IS COVERED UNDER THE STATE PLAN AS IF SUCH AUTHORIZATION WERE THE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION MADE BY THE THIRD PARTY PAYOR FOR SUCH ITEM OR SERVICE; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-117.7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE DIVISION SHALL NOT REIMBURSE OR PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR GENDER TRANSITION PROCEDURES FOR ANY PERSON; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-145, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT A QUARTERLY HOSPITAL ASSESSMENT MAY EXCEED THE ASSESSMENT IN THE PRIOR QUARTER BY MORE THAN \$3,750,000.00 IF SUCH INCREASE IS TO MAXIMIZE FEDERAL FUNDS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO REIMBURSE HOSPITALS FOR SERVICES PROVIDED UNDER NEW PROGRAMS FOR HOSPITALS, FOR INCREASED SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT PROGRAMS FOR HOSPITALS OR TO ASSIST WITH STATE MATCHING FUNDS AS AUTHORIZED BY THE LEGISLATURE; TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE THE PORTION OF THE HOSPITAL ASSESSMENT APPLICABLE TO LONG-TERM ACUTE CARE HOSPITALS AND REHABILITATION HOSPITALS IF CMS WAIVES CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-115.1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT A

PREGNANT WOMAN MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF HER PREGNANCY AND DOCUMENTATION OF HER MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME WHEN SEEKING A DETERMINATION OF PRESUMPTIVE ELIGIBILITY; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DEFINE TERMS; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO DEVELOP AND PROMULGATE WRITTEN EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND INFORMATION FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS ABOUT MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS; TO REQUIRE HOSPITALS PROVIDING BIRTH SERVICES TO PROVIDE SUCH EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO NEW PARENTS AND, AS APPROPRIATE, OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS; TO REQUIRE THAT SUCH MATERIALS BE PROVIDED TO ANY WOMAN WHO PRESENTS WITH SIGNS OF A MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-140-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE ANY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OR NURSE MIDWIFE WHO RENDERS POSTNATAL CARE OR PEDIATRIC INFANT CARE TO ENSURE THAT THE POSTNATAL CARE PATIENT OR BIRTHING MOTHER OF THE PEDIATRIC INFANT CARE PATIENT, AS APPLICABLE, IS OFFERED SCREENING FOR POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION AND TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE REFERRALS IF SUCH PATIENT OR MOTHER IS DEEMED LIKELY TO BE SUFFERING FROM POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-107, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO ESTABLISH A MEDICAID ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND BENEFICIARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS; TO PROVIDE THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SERVING ON JANUARY 1, 2025, SHALL BE SELECTED TO SERVE ON THE MEDICAID ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AND SUCH MEMBERS SHALL SERVE UNTIL JULY 1, 2028; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

HB 569. Vetoed 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 41-7-191, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE CERTAIN PROVISIONS RELATING TO A HOSPITAL THAT HAS A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR A FORTY-BED PSYCHIATRIC RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FACILITY IN DESOTO COUNTY; TO PROVIDE THAT THERE SHALL BE NO PROHIBITION OR RESTRICTIONS ON PARTICIPATION IN THE MEDICAID PROGRAM FOR SUCH FACILITY THAT WOULD NOT OTHERWISE APPLY TO ANY OTHER SUCH FACILITY; TO REQUIRE THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR ADDITIONAL BEDS IN A COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED ADULTS LOCATED IN MADISON COUNTY; TO REVISE THE CONDITIONS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NEED ISSUED FOR A LONG-TERM CARE HOSPITAL IN HARRISON COUNTY TO ALLOW THE HOSPITAL TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEDICAID PROGRAM AS A CROSSOVER PROVIDER; TO PROVIDE THAT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER NEED NOT OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR ANY HOSPITAL BEDS, SERVICES, HEALTH CARE FACILITIES, OR MEDICAL EQUIPMENT WHICH HAVE BEEN APPROVED AND CONTINUOUSLY OPERATED UNDER A CERTIFICATE OF NEED EXEMPTION FOR A TEACHING HOSPITAL, OR WHICH ARE APPROVED BEFORE JULY 1, 2025, SO LONG AS THEY DO NOT UNDERGO A PHYSICAL RELOCATION; TO PROVIDE THAT AFTER

JULY 1, 2025, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER SHALL HAVE AN ACADEMIC EXEMPTION FROM THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED REQUIREMENTS ONLY WITHIN A CERTAIN AREA OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI; TO CLARIFY THAT IN ORDER FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER TO QUALIFY FOR SUCH AN ACADEMIC EXEMPTION, THE STATE HEALTH OFFICER MUST DETERMINE THAT THE PROPOSED EQUIPMENT OR FACILITY FULFILLS A SUBSTANTIAL AND MEANINGFUL ACADEMIC FUNCTION; TO DIRECT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF NEED TO ANY PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL LOCATED IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, THAT WAS PROVIDING ADULT PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES AS OF JANUARY 1, 2025, UNDER CERTIFICATE OF NEED AUTHORITY THAT WAS TRANSFERRED TO IT WITHIN THE PAST FIVE YEARS UNDER A CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP, AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE NEW CERTIFICATE OF NEED SHALL AUTHORIZE THE CONTINUATION OF SUCH ADULT PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES, PROVIDED THAT THE HOSPITAL RELINQUISHES ITS EXISTING AUTHORITY TO OPERATE UNDER THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED AUTHORITY TRANSFERRED TO THE HOSPITAL AS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE NEW CERTIFICATE OF NEED; TO DIRECT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A STUDY AND REPORT BY DECEMBER 1, 2025, ON THE FEASIBILITY OF EXEMPTING SMALL HOSPITALS FROM THE REQUIREMENT FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR THE PLACEMENT OF DIALYSIS UNITS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF TRANSFERS FOR PATIENTS REQUIRING DIALYSIS, THE FEASIBILITY OF EXEMPTING SMALL HOSPITALS FROM THE REQUIREMENT FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NEED TO OPERATE GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRIC UNITS, AND THE FEASIBILITY OF A NEW REQUIREMENT THAT ACUTE ADULT PSYCHIATRIC UNITS TREAT A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF UNINSURED PATIENTS OR PAY A PERIODIC FEE IN LIEU THEREOF; TO AMEND SECTION 41-7-173, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM DOLLAR AMOUNTS OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AND MAJOR MEDICAL EQUIPMENT THAT REQUIRE THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF NEED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

HB 924. Vetoesd 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO CREATE THE CREATING LOGIC FOR EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REFORM (CLEAR) ACT; TO CREATE NEW SECTION 5-3-77, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE THE PEER COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH A PROGRAM OF REVIEWING SELECTED NEWLY ADOPTED STATE AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE RULES; TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH REVIEWS SHALL PRODUCE A REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE ON NEWLY ADOPTED STATE AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND THEIR CONFORMITY TO THE INTENT OF THE LAW AUTHORIZING THEM, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER MATTER THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE; TO AMEND SECTION 47-5-579, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CLARIFY THAT ALL PROGRAM WITHHOLDINGS FROM PARTICIPANTS OF THE PRISON INDUSTRIES CORPORATION'S WORK INITIATIVE PROGRAM SHALL BE CALCULATED BASED UPON PARTICIPANT WAGES AFTER MANDATORY DEDUCTIONS; TO REQUIRE ACCOUNTING OF ANY DEPENDENT SUPPORT PAYMENTS, FINES, RESTITUTIONS, FEES OR COSTS, AS ORDERED BY THE COURT, BE

REPORTED FOR EACH WORK INITIATIVE PARTICIPANT; TO REQUIRE THAT THE REMAINING SENTENCE LENGTH OF SUCH PARTICIPANT BE COLLECTED, MAINTAINED AND REPORTED; AND TO REQUIRE THAT A FINANCIAL ACCOUNT CREATION DATE BE COLLECTED, MAINTAINED AND REPORTED FOR EACH PARTICIPANT; TO AMEND SECTION 1, CHAPTER 431, LAWS OF 2024, TO EXTEND THE OPERATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI K-12 AND POSTSECONDARY MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE FOR ONE ADDITIONAL YEAR; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL DEVELOP AND REPORT ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2025; TO DISSOLVE THE TASK FORCE UPON PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT DUE ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2025; TO ENACT THE "MISSISSIPPI K-12 AND POSTSECONDARY MENTAL HEALTH ACT OF 2025"; TO ESTABLISH AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (ICCCY); TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE; TO SPECIFY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S COORDINATING RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO THE GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND INFORMATION COMPILED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE; TO AMEND SECTION 43-13-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 43-14-3 AND 43-14-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO CREATE SECTION 5-3-70, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR CIVIL ENFORCEMENT OF PEER COMMITTEE SUBPOENAS; TO AMEND SECTION 5-3-59, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR PERSONS WHO FAIL TO COMPLY WITH SUBPOENAS FROM THE PEER COMMITTEE; TO AMEND SECTIONS 5-1-23 AND 5-1-25, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THESE PROVISIONS ARE NOT APPLICABLE TO SUBPOENAS ISSUED BY THE PEER COMMITTEE; TO AMEND SECTION 5-1-35, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE SERGEANT-AT-ARMS OF THE MISSISSIPPI STATE SENATE SHALL DELIVER TO DPS THE REQUEST TO SERVE SUBPOENAS ISSUED BY THE PEER COMMITTEE; TO AMEND SECTION 29-13-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO ALLOW FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION TO ESTABLISH A SELF-INSURANCE FUND OR SELF-INSURANCE RESERVES, OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF, TO INSURE STATE-OWNED BUILDINGS AND CONTENTS; TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI SELF-INSURANCE TASK FORCE TO REPORT ON THE COST BENEFITS OF SELF-INSURING BEFORE FUNDS ARE EXPENDED TO SELF-INSURE; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI SELF-INSURANCE TASK FORCE TO STUDY, REPORT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING A SELF-INSURANCE PLAN; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN ITEMS FOR THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY, REPORT AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING PROCEDURE OF THE TASK FORCE; TO REQUIRE THE TASK FORCE TO MAKE A REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, INCLUDING ANY RECOMMENDED LEGISLATION, TO THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE CHAIRS OF THE INSURANCE COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2025, AT WHICH TIME THE TASK FORCE WILL BE DISSOLVED; TO AMEND SECTION 31-11-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 37-29-67, 41-73-31,

37-7-303 AND 37-101-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

HB 1085. Vetoed 3/14/25.

Veto Referred to Ways and Means 3/18/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 57-78-3 AND 57-78-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, RATHER THAN THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SHALL BE THE ADMINISTERING AGENCY FOR THE GRANT PROGRAM; TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM OF GRANT FUNDS THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO A COMMUNITY UNDER THE PROGRAM DURING A YEAR; TO DELETE THE PROVISION REQUIRING THAT THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY SHALL PROVIDE THE MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION WITH NO MORE THAN TWO PERCENT OF THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS DEPOSITED INTO THE MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION GRANT FUND FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES IN CARRYING OUT ITS DUTIES UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM; TO REPEAL SECTION 33 OF CHAPTER 113, LAWS OF 2024, WHICH PROVIDES FUNDS FROM THE MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM FUND TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR MAKING GRANTS TO CERTAIN MAIN STREET DESIGNATED COMMUNITIES FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS; TO AMEND SECTION 2 OF CHAPTER 113, LAWS OF 2024, TO REVISE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF SPECIAL FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE AUTHORITY; TO AMEND CHAPTER 66, LAWS OF 2024, TO REVISE THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 APPROPRIATION TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF SPECIAL FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM THE MISSISSIPPI MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM FUND TO CERTAIN MAIN STREET DESIGNATED COMMUNITIES FOR CERTAIN PROJECTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

HB 1126. Vetoed 4/24/25.

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 57-119-13, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR THE MAXIMUM MATCH REQUIREMENT FOR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES FROM THE GULF COAST RESTORATION FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

STATISTICS OF THE 2025 REGULAR SESSION

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Bills Passed Both Houses	410	486	472	460
Bills That Became Law	259	408	424	381
Senate Bills Introduced	1290	1231	1159	1212
S.B. Passed by Senate	344	321	299	293
S.B. Passed by House	206	212	243	212
S.B. Died in Conference	61	25	19	31
S.B. Approved by Governor	129	176	216	162
S.B. Became Law Without Governor's Signature	0	5	1	1
S.B. Vetoed	4	1	4	4
S.B. Partially Vetoed	0	0	0	1
S.B. Vetoes Overridden	0	0	0	0
S.C.R. Introduced	44	49	74	105
S.C.R. Adopted by Senate	30	32	60	92
S.C.R. Adopted by House	26	31	58	91
S.R. Introduced	154	133	111	63
S.R. Adopted	144	128	107	61
House Bills Introduced	2012	2130	1820	1769
H.B. Passed by House	390	445	387	379
H.B. Passed by Senate	204	274	229	248
H.B. Died in Conference	66	40	19	25
H.B. Approved by Governor	125	209	207	212
H.B. Became Law Without Governor's Signature	5	16	0	6
H.B. Vetoed	4	5	0	1
H.B. Partially Vetoed	0	2	2	1
H.B. Vetoes Overridden	0	0	0	0
H.C.R. Introduced	70	66	64	90
H.C.R. Adopted by House	41	31	35	59
H.C.R. Adopted by Senate	38	30	34	58
Nominations Received	105	111	97	158
Nominations Approved	89	99	89	147

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ACCOUNTABILITY, EFFICIENCY, TRANSPARENCY

SB 2078. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2078 extends the repealer date for the State Board of Funeral Service to July 1, 2029.

SB 2562. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2562 increases the circuit clerks fees to Eighty-Five Dollars (\$85.00) for each of the days a circuit clerk and any necessary deputies attend the circuit court term.

HB 13. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 13 amends Section 31-11-3 to require the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB) to establish criteria for projects up to \$10,000,000 to make a determination to whether a community college may self-manage capital projects funded, in whole or in part, by general obligation bonds or other state resources. The criteria that the board must use shall include, but not be limited to, whether the community college employs applicable full-time personnel, including licensed architects, qualified construction engineers, and other experienced employees designated for the management of the construction of capital projects. The MCCB shall consider all of the criteria and make a determination. If the MCCB makes a favorable determination, the established Board of Trustees of each college shall make a second determination as to whether it is in the best interest of the college to procure and self-manage all such contracts. If both the MCCB and the Board of Trustees of each college make a favorable determination, a memorandum of understanding shall be executed by the MCCB and the college.

HB 186. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 186 amends Section 31-7-14 to clarify that an entity may use any sources of funds available to the entity to enter into certain energy services contracts. This bill also extends the date of the repealer on energy efficiency services public contracts to July 1, 2028.

HB 767. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 767 amends Section 55-15-21 to revise the composition of the Grand Gulf Military Monument Commission to increase the number of commission members from five members to seven members. Of the two additional members, one shall be appointed by the Governor from the state-at-large after consideration of recommendations for the appointment made by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one member shall be appointed from the state-at-large by the Lieutenant Governor.

HB 917. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 917 amends Section 57-1-14 to revise the exemption for records that contain client information concerning development projects from the Mississippi Public Records Act. The exemption, which applied to just those records of the Mississippi Development Authority, will now apply to the records of any public body that contain client information concerning development projects, and the period of the exemption will be for four years instead of two years.

HB 958. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 958 removes outdated exemptions to the requirements for the Mississippi Department Of Information Technology Services (MDITS). It revises certain definitions used in those statutes prescribing the powers and duties of MDITS and other state agencies regarding information technology. It also deletes the

requirement that the executive director of its agency involve the Public Procurement Review Board in decisions regarding information technology, provides that acquisitions of information technology made by state agencies while exempt from public purchasing requirements remain exempt until it determines a new acquisition is required. It also deletes provisions:

- Requiring the state personnel board to be involved in ITS staffing;
- Relating to certain equipment support contracts entered into by ITS;
- Deleting specific procurement requirements for the acquisition of nonregulated telecommunications systems.

HB 1094. See summary under Public Health and Welfare heading.

HB 1194. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/20/25.

HB 1194 authorizes a for-profit entity involved in the sale, transmission and distribution of potable water, which entity was formed solely for the purpose of complying with a federal or state order, to convert to a body politic as a water authority.

HB 1293. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1293 amends Section 51-15-105 to revise the eligibility criteria for persons appointed to the board of directors of the Pat Harrison Waterway District. No appointed person may be a current member of a board of supervisors, a full-time elected official or a county employee.

HB 1338. See summary under Judiciary, Division B heading.

HB 1505. Effective on passage. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1505 amends Section 31-7-13.2 to revise the construction manager at risk method of project delivery to provide that the

construction manager for projects for Institutions of Higher Learning shall not be required to solicit bids for construction on the project using the public purchasing law. The construction manager shall be permitted to obtain proposals from contractors or vendors, with such proposals being based on certain qualifications and criteria for contracts for the various scopes of work for the project. The construction manager, in consultation with the agency or governing authority, shall publish the above defined qualifications and criteria that shall be considered in the process for selecting contractors and vendors that will contract with the construction manager to construct the project at least four weeks in advance of any award of contract to such contractors or vendors. Confidential and proprietary information furnished by a construction manager or a contractor or vendor pursuant to this section shall not be disclosed outside of the agency, governing authority or construction manager without the prior written consent of all parties. The construction manager shall not be required to submit a proposed guaranteed maximum price for the construction of a project, or for a phase or component of the project, until after the construction manager obtains certain information. A construction manager or its affiliates may self-perform construction work on a project so long as certain conditions are met; however, a construction manager or its affiliates shall only be allowed to self-perform construction work on not more than 15% of the project.

AGRICULTURE

SB 2025. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2025 adds definitions for "beneficial substance" and "plant biostimulant" to the Fertilizing Materials and Additives chapter of the Agriculture, Horticulture and Animals title of the Mississippi Code. Additionally, the bill provides that the commissioner and State Chemist may adopt a rule codifying the Association of American Plant Food Control Officials' recommended beneficial substances label, which pertains to plant and soil amendments and plant biostimulant products. Lastly, SB 2025 requires that bulk shipment containers of soil and plant amendments must be labeled and include information that states the brand, net weight or net volume, the name and address of the guarantor, a purpose statement, directions for use and a statement of composition showing the amount of each ingredient.

SB 2264. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2264 modifies the definition of agrotourism activity to mean any activity conducted on a location registered by an agrotourism professional, which allows member of the general public to view and enjoy rural activities. The bill also amends the warning notice signage requirements at an agrotourism location. Now, a warning notice must be placed in a clearly visible location at the entrance of an agrotourism location, rather than signs at each agrotourism activity site.

SB 2266. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2266 requires the Mississippi Department of Revenue to publish a list of items eligible for sales tax exemptions or reduced sales tax rates for holders of a commercial farmer permit. The department shall publish the list by August 1, 2025.

HB 913. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 913 provides a comprehensive framework for labeling and regulating meat and meat substitute products in Mississippi. Its primary aim is to prevent consumer confusion regarding the authenticity of food products marketed as "meat." The bill introduces definitions, inspection protocols, labeling standards and enforcement mechanisms targeting cultivated-protein, insect-protein and plant-protein food products that could be mistaken for traditional meat derived from animal slaughter.

Section 1 of the bill defines key terms such as:

- "Meat product" means food derived from animal slaughter and meat processing.
- "Manufactured-protein food product" means a cultivated-protein, insect-protein or plant-protein product.
- "Identifying meat term" means any word or phrase that states, indicates, suggests or describes a meat product, regardless of whether the word or phrase is used individually or as a compound word.
- "Qualifying term" means a word, compound word or phrase that would clearly disclose to a reasonable purchaser of meat products from a food processing plant that a food product is not a real meat product, such as: "cell-cultivated," "cell-cultured," "plant-based," "lab-grown," "vegan" or a comparable word or phrase as approved by the department.
- "Misbranded" means a food product using a meat-identifying term without a qualifying term to clarify it is not actual meat.

Section 2 empowers the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) to conduct routine premises and inventory inspections of food processing plants licensed by the

department in accordance with the "Meat, Meat-Food and Poultry Regulation Inspection Law of 1960."

Section 3 of the bill prescribes the elements that must be met in order to determine if a food product is misbranded as meat. Misbranding is established if all of the following are satisfied: (i) the product is or contains a manufactured-protein food product; (ii) the product contains more than trace amounts of one or more plant-protein food products; (iii) the food product is offered for sale or sold by a food processing plant; and (iv) any labeling placed directly on the product packaging or storage container includes an identifying meat term.

Section 4 of the bill empowers the Department of Agriculture to issue the stop for potential violations if it has reasonable cause to believe that a food processing plant, retail or food establishment is offering for sale or selling a food product that is misbranded as a meat product, preventing the further offering for sale or selling of the food product until a determination is made that the product is not misbranded as a meat product.

Upon a determination that a food product being offered for sale or being sold is misbranded as a meat product, the appropriate regulatory authority may issue an embargo requiring the disposal of the misbranded meat product by any means other than by sale to purchasers. The department or the Attorney General shall enforce the stop or embargo orders in the chancery court of the county where the violation occurs.

Section 5 prohibits food processing plants, retail or food establishments from misbranding a food product as a meat product and imposes civil penalties for established violation of \$500 for each violation, not to exceed \$10,000 in total for violations arising from the same occurrence, with each day of an

established violation going uncorrected constituting a separate offense. Monies collected for violations are deposited in the State General Fund. Additionally, this section provides alleged violators with a process of contesting imposition of the civil penalties to the department, and further provides an appeals process through the circuit and Supreme Courts.

Section 6 authorizes the department to suspend or revoke the license of a food processing plant, retail or food establishment that offers for sale or sells a food product that is misbranded as a meat product.

Section 7 requires schools, colleges and universities to adopt policies preventing the purchase of misbranded or cultivated-protein food products.

Section 8 mandates final point-of-sale disclosures in retail and food service settings of the products' authenticity as a meat or nonmeat product with appropriate labeling. The methods of notification required under this section are specific to retail establishments (by means of a label, stamp, mark, placard or other clear and visible sign on the meat or nonmeat product or on the package, display, holding unit or bin containing the product) and food service establishments (by indications on the menu). The Commissioner of Agriculture may require preparers, storers, handlers or distributors of food products, meats, meat-food products, cultivated-protein food products, manufactured-protein food products, insect-protein food products and plant-protein food products to maintain verifiable record-keeping audit trails for the purpose of verifying compliance. Additionally, wholesalers and distributors are required to certify product authenticity origin through a state or federal agency that regulates the processing of meat or through a federal agency that verifies that meat and/or other products produced in other countries.

Section 9 amends Section 75-35-3 to include the formal definitions of the terms "cultivated-protein," "insect-protein," "plant-protein" and "manufactured-protein food products" in the definitions section of the "Mississippi Meat Inspection Law of 1968."

Section 10 amends Section 75-35-15 to prohibit the manufacture or sale of cultivated-protein food products, and further conforms the labeling requirements specific to nonmeat food products by including plant-protein and insect-protein food products, as well as requiring final point-of-sale consumer disclosure.

Section 11 amends Section 75-33-3 by adding "food establishment" definition to conform to the definitions section of the "Meat, Meat-Food and Poultry Regulation Inspection Law of 1960."

Section 12 amends Section 75-33-7 to require all food establishments, unless exempted by the USDA inspection system, to be licensed by the Commissioner of Agriculture in order to operate such establishment. This section also updates the list of included species in "meat" definitions to be consistent with modern terminology and coverage.

HB 1006. Effective 7/1/25. Law without Governor's signature 3/21/25.

HB 1006 prohibits the manufacture, sale, offer for sale, distribution or possession for sale of any "cultivated food product," defined as food produced from cultured animal cells within the State of Mississippi, significantly reinforcing the state's regulatory stance against lab-grown or cell-cultivated meat alternatives in all forms of commerce.

The bill imposes misdemeanor criminal penalties up to \$500 or three months of incarceration for individuals convicted of

violations, and licensing sanctions resulting in suspension or revocation if the Commissioner of Agriculture determines a violation has occurred. The bill further vests regulatory enforcement mechanisms within the State Department of Health.

Additionally, the bill amends existing labeling provisions in Section 75-35-15 to expressly prohibit the manufacture or sale of food product that contains cultured animal tissue produced from animal cell cultures outside of the organism from which it is derived within the State of Mississippi.

HB 1295. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1295 revises and clarifies Mississippi's agritourism liability protection laws by amending:

- Section 69-53-1 to update the definition of "agritourism activity" to specify that these activities occur on the premises of a location registered by an agritourism professional.
- Section 69-53-5 to require agritourism professionals to post signage with the statutory warning at the entrance to the agritourism location in a clearly visible location.

APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2086. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2086 amends Section 73-35-17 to delete the repealer on certain application and licensure fees for real estate brokers.

SB 2489. See summary under Judiciary, Division A heading.

SB 2526. See summary under Universities and Colleges heading.

SB 2730. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2730 amends Section 41-59-5 to provide that the State Board of Health shall equitably divide funds appropriated from the Mississippi Burn Care Fund among all certified health centers.

SB 2743. See summary under Public Health and Welfare heading.

HB 623. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 623 amends Section 99-15-17 to increase compensation for attorneys who represent indigent clients. The bill increases the amount to \$3,000 for representation in the circuit court, \$600 for courts without record, \$6,000 for capital cases, and \$3,000 for appeals to the Supreme Court.

HB 624. See summary under Judiciary, Division A heading.

HB 807. See summary under Public Health and Welfare heading.

HB 918. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/13/25.

HB 918 amends Section 39-5-145 to transfer administration of the Mississippi Community Heritage Preservation Grant Fund

from the Department of Finance and Administration to the Department of Archives and History.

HB 1074. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1074 amends Section 25-53-151 to add two members to the Electronic Government Oversight Committee that oversees the implementation of E-Government and related technology initiatives: the Executive Director of the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and the Executive Director of the Department of Archives and History, or their designees. The addition of these new members expands the committee from seven members to nine members.

HB 1127. Effective on passage. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1127 requires the agencies that administer grant funds under programs that were funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to report to the Department of Finance and Administration by October 1, 2025, the amount of funds that have been expended, the amounts remaining to be expended and/or remaining to be requested for reimbursement by each subgrantee.

- Each of those agencies is required to notify all subgrantees of this reporting requirement within 30 days of the effective date of this act and to provide a second notice on September 1, 2025.

- The Department of Finance and Administration is directed to submit the combined reporting of all funds to the Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, House and Senate Appropriations Chairmen, and Legislative Budget Office on November 3, 2025.

In addition, the bill requires each agency to which funds were appropriated or reappropriated by the Legislature from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund or the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Lost Revenue Fund in any fiscal year to report

the amount and source of those funds that have not been expended by November 1, 2025.

- This report is required to be filed by December 1, 2025, with the Department of Finance and Administration, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Clerk of the House, who will distribute the report to the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Senate and House Appropriations Chairs.

The bill also revises a chapter law from the 2024 Regular Session to require the State Treasurer to transfer any Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds determined to be available after October 5, 2024, to the ARPA-MDOT Maintenance Project Fund.

Finally, the bill provides that if the programs that were funded with ARPA funds have a reporting requirement under this act and a subgrantee has not provided two consecutive reports to the appropriate agency, the Department of Finance and Administration is authorized to transfer available funds to the ARPA-MDOT Maintenance Project Fund.

HB 1129. Section 1 of this act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2024, and the remainder of this act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1129 authorizes the Department of Finance and Administration to receive repayments on approved loans from the Educational Facilities Revolving Loan Fund Program that was repealed on July 1, 2024.

- The State Department of Education is required to provide the Department of Finance and Administration with all Educational Facilities Revolving Loan Fund program terms of repayment and balances owed from school districts.

- The Department of Finance and Administration will deposit those repayments into the Education Enhancement Fund.

- If a school district is in arrears on loan repayments, the Department of Education is required to remit the amount owed to the Department of Finance and Administration and to withhold that amount from future payments of total funding formula funds to the school district.

- The State Treasurer, in conjunction with the State Fiscal Officer, is directed to transfer to the Education Enhancement Fund all remaining funds in the Educational Facilities Revolving Loan Fund.

HB 1131. Effective on passage. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 1131 revises the purposes of certain projects funded with monies disbursed from the 2022 IHL Capital Improvements Fund and the 2022 State Agencies Capital Improvements Fund, and clarifies and corrects names and purposes of certain projects funded with monies disbursed from the 2024 Local Improvements Projects Fund.

HB 1414. See summary under Economic and Workforce Development heading.

HB 1459. See summary under Judiciary, Division A heading.

HB 1491. See summary under Technology heading.

HB 1509. See summary under Judiciary, Division A heading.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

SB 2423. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2423 amends Section 73-35-10, to require the Mississippi Real Estate Commission to provide prior written notification to any licensee whose license, once issued, is subject to be amended, suspended, revoked or not renewed. It amends Section 73-35-23, to change the standard of proof required at administrative hearings from a preponderance of the evidence to clear and convincing evidence. It requires any complaint initiated by or filed with the commission to be resolved by dismissal or issuance of a formal complaint within 120 days of the date written notice is provided to licensee(s) and their responsible broker(s) of commencement of an investigation pertaining to any complaint. Finally, it requires any complaint initiated by or filed with the commission to be resolved by final dismissal, final ruling on any formal complaint or by entry of agreed dispositional order within one year of the date written notice is provided to licensee(s) and their responsible broker(s) of commencement of an investigation pertaining to any complaint.

SB 2495. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2495 amends Section 75-67-639, to extend the date of the repealer on the Mississippi Credit Availability Act to July 1, 2030. It also amends Section 75-67-619, to increase the maximum outstanding principal balance of a credit availability account from \$2,500 to \$3,250. Further, it directs the Department of Banking and Consumer Finance to issue a memo each year authorizing a new maximum outstanding principal balance for credit availability accounts and to calculate such new amount by applying any increase or decrease in the United States Bureau of

Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the previous calendar year to the previous maximum outstanding principal balance and rounding that amount upward to the nearest \$10 increment.

SB 2508. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2508 authorizes mortgage loan originators to perform origination activities at a remote location under the supervision and in compliance with the licensee's policies and procedures subject to certain conditions. It amends Section 81-18-3 to define the terms "employee," "exclusive agent," "independent contractor" and "remote location." Further, the bill amends:

- Section 81-18-9, to increase the fee for a mortgage loan originator license;
- Section 81-18-11, to increase the maximum sum of the surety bond for mortgage brokers, mortgage lenders and initial applicants;
- Section 81-18-15, to increase the license fee for initial applications for licenses to operate as a mortgage broker or lender and to increase annual renewal fees;
- Section 81-18-17, to increase the application fee and the annual renewal fee for a licensee's branch office; and
- Section 81-18-21, to increase the examination fee for licensees in the state.

The bill also amends Section 81-18-25 to provide that nothing in Chapter 18 of Title 81, Mississippi Code of 1972, shall be interpreted to prohibit mortgage loan originators of a licensee from performing origination activities at a remote location, his or her residence, or another remote location, provided that the licensee complies with certain provisions of law.

HB 1316. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1316 reenacts Sections 73-11-41 through 73-11-73, which create the State Board of Funeral Service and prescribe its powers and duties. It also amends Section 73-11-33 to extend the repeal date on those sections until July 1, 2028.

HB 1325. Effective on passage. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1325 amends Section 27-105-305 to revise the interval of time for counties to publish notice of the acceptance of bids from financial institutions to serve as the county depository whenever the board of supervisors designates a depository during the board members' last year of their four-year term of office. In such cases, the interval of time for giving notice may be no longer than 24 months. The bill also deletes the prohibition against a board of supervisors designating a county depository during the last year of a four-year term.

HB 1330. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1330 expands the borrowing authority of state banks and trust companies by deleting the limitation that investments may be made only in small business investment companies incorporated in Mississippi. Section 81-5-25 is amended to authorize any investments, not just shares of stock, in both instate and out-of-state small business investment companies which are recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The bill also amends Section 81-5-45 to require the board of directors of a bank to meet at least quarterly, unless otherwise directed by the Department of Banking and Consumer Finance based on an examination finding or applicable regulatory finding. The requirement for periodic meetings by executive and auditing committees selected by a majority of the board of directors to meet in months when the board does not meet is deleted; however, the audit committee is required to meet at

least quarterly, notwithstanding the board also meeting at least quarterly.

HB 1428. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

HB 1428 is the Money Transmission Modernization Act, an act developed by the Conference of State Banking Supervisors to establish a single set of nationwide standards in order to coordinate licensing and regulation, protect the public from financial crime, standardize activities subject to licensing, and modernize requirements to ensure customer funds are protected. The bill replaces Sections 75-15-1 through 75-15-35, which prescribe the current law governing the business of money transmissions, the Mississippi Money Transmitters Act.

The bill defines numerous terms, including "money transmission," defined as the following:

- Selling or issuing payment instruments to an instate person;
- Selling or issuing stored value to an instate person; and
- Receiving money or monetary value for transmission from an instate person.

Section 4 of the bill specifically exempts certain persons from the requirements of the act; persons claiming an exemption may be required by the Commissioner of Banking and Consumer Finance to provide information documenting the person's qualifications for the claimed exemption.

The bill grants broad authority to the commissioner in the administration and enforcement of the act. The commissioner may promulgate rules and regulations for the act's implementation and may impose and collect fees associated with applications, examinations, investigations and other actions.

The bill requires all information received by the commissioner relating to applicants and investigations to be

kept confidential; however, certain information described in Section 7 may be made available to the public and on the banking department's website.

The commissioner is authorized to conduct an annual examination or investigation of licensees and is encouraged to participate in multistate supervisory processes established between states and coordinated through national organizations.

Section 11 of the bill requires a person engaged in the business of money transmission to procure a license. The commissioner is encouraged to take certain actions to promote consistent licensing with other states. Detailed application requirements are prescribed for corporations and individuals seeking a license. A license must be renewed annually, accompanied by a renewal fee equal to \$800 plus an additional \$100 for each additional location in Mississippi through which the licensee plans to conduct money transmission. The commissioner may suspend or revoke a license due to a licensee's failure to continue to meet the qualifications applicable to applicants seeking a new license.

The bill creates certain requirements for a person seeking to acquire control of a licensee, including obtaining written approval from the commissioner before acquiring control. The commissioner must determine whether an application to acquire control of a licensee will be approved or denied.

Licensees adding or replacing key individuals must report such changes to the commissioner, who may issue a notice of disapproval.

Each licensee must submit a report of condition within 45 days after the end of a quarter. Required components of the report are prescribed. Within 90 days after the end of each fiscal year, a licensee must file an audited financial statement. If certain events prescribed in the bill occur, a

licensee must file a report of such with the commissioner within one business day after the licensee knows of the occurrence. Licensees also must comply with the reporting requirements set forth in the Bank Secrecy Act.

The bill requires a licensee to maintain certain records for a specified period. Persons may not engage in the business of money transmission on behalf of a person not licensed under the act. A licensee must forward money received for transmission in a timely manner in accordance with the agreement between the licensee and sender, and a licensee must refund a sender money received for transmission unless certain specified conditions exist. A sender must be provided a receipt for money received for transmission, which can be a paper receipt or electronic record. The bill prescribes net worth requirements that vary according to a licensee's total assets, and a licensee must maintain a surety bond and permissible investments, as described in the bill.

A license may be suspended or revoked by the commissioner if certain specified actions occur. Except in those instances when a license may be revoked automatically, a licensee must be provided 10 days' notice of the revocation and may demand a hearing. The commissioner may issue an order to cease and desist whenever it is believed that a violation of the act is likely to cause immediate and irreparable harm. In addition, the commissioner may sue a licensee in the Chancery Court of the First Judicial District of Hinds County to enjoin a person from engaging in a violation. The commissioner also may enter into a consent order to resolve a matter. The bill makes intentionally making false statements in required records and engaging in activities without a license felonies and establishes criminal penalties for such violations. In addition, the commissioner may assess a civil penalty for violations of the act. A person

performing acts without a required license may be served with an order to cease and desist. The commissioner is authorized to examine persons and all relevant books and records to determine if a violation has occurred.

Lastly, the bill provides for a transition period for persons currently licensed to engage in the business of money transmission. To the extent HB 1428 conflicts with current law or establishes new requirements, a current licensee will not be subject to the new provisions until the later of the date on which the licensee renews its current license or July 1, 2026.

CORRECTIONS

SB 2049. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2049 amends Section 47-5-731, to extend the repealer on the Prison Overcrowding Emergency Powers Act from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2029.

The Prison Overcrowding Emergency Powers Act requires the Commissioner of Corrections to notify the Governor and the State Parole Board whenever the prison system population is in excess of 95% of operating capacity in order to take appropriate action to either reduce the prison system population or expand operating capacity.

SB 2050. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2050 amends Section 47-5-1015, to extend the repealer on the Intensive Supervision Program and the Electronic Home Detention Program under the Department of Corrections from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2029.

The Intensive Supervision Program may be used by the Department of Corrections as an alternative to incarceration for offenders who are not convicted of a crime of violence with the exception of a sex crime.

Participants in the intensive supervision program shall participate with the approved electronic monitoring device designated by the department.

SB 2051. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2051 amends Section 47-5-940, to extend the date of the repealer on the authority of the Department of Corrections to contract with the Bolivar County Regional Facility for a drug and alcohol treatment program from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2029.

SB 2239. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2239 amends Section 47-5-931, to authorize the Department of Corrections to contract with Forrest County and Wayne County to provide for the housing, care, and control of offenders who are in the custody of the State of Mississippi.

SB 2242. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2242 amends Section 47-5-401, to clarify who may request assignment to the work release program established under 47-5-401 and that admission to the program shall be in the discretion of the sheriff. It authorizes the Mississippi Department of Corrections to establish an inmate work program under which eligible inmates perform services for the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The Mississippi Department of Corrections shall adopt rules necessary to implement the purposes of this act, including those necessary to define eligibility for participation in the program. Inmate compensation for the program shall be no less than the prevailing wage for the position and shall under no circumstances pay less than the federal minimum wage. Any inmate who participates in the program established under the Mississippi Department of Corrections and the Mississippi Department of Transportation shall maintain an account through a local financial institution and shall provide a copy of a check stub to the commissioner or his designee.

The bill provides that any inmate who is a work participant for the program established under the Mississippi Department of Corrections and the Mississippi Department of Transportation shall be required to pay his or her wages for the following purposes:

- To pay 25% toward any support of dependents or to the Mississippi Department of Human Services on behalf of

dependents as may be ordered by a judge of competent jurisdiction as well as fines, restitution, or costs as ordered by the court to include any fines and fees associated with obtaining a valid driver's license upon release. Once all the aforementioned balances have been cleared, or if no liability exists, these funds shall be added to the participant's savings diversion program.

- ▶ To save 50% of the inmate's wages in the account maintained through a local financial institution required for participation in the program. Monies under this subparagraph shall be made available to the inmate upon parole or release.

- ▶ To pay up to 15% of the inmate's wages to the facility for administrative expenses to include transportation costs.

- ▶ The inmate shall have access to the remaining 10% of the monies in his or her account to purchase incidental expenses.

- ▶ Any monies remaining after all mandatory deductions are paid, shall be deposited in the inmate's account maintained through a local financial institution required for participation in the program. Any monies remaining, upon the release of the inmate, shall be released to the inmate upon his or her release.

- The work program required under this act with the Mississippi Department of Transportation may, in the discretion of the Mississippi Department of Corrections, be established in each Mississippi Department of Transportation District.

SB 2242 amends Section 47-5-547, to provide that the Mississippi Department of Corrections may assign the management and oversight of the work release program established by this act to the prison industries corporation (MAGCOR) if it

determines that this will be conducive to providing effective job training for state inmates.

SB 2243. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/26.

SB 2243 amends Section 47-5-1211, to provide that the negotiated rate for correctional services under a contract for private incarceration shall be based upon the classification of the inmate and not a flat rate.

SB 2357. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2357 establishes a work-release program at Delta Correctional Facility. The corporation, as defined under Section 47-5-539, shall serve as the program administrator and shall focus on meaningful, skill-oriented, private-sector work opportunities in the surrounding communities. There shall be a limit of 100 people in the program at a time.

Any person who has been sentenced to confinement in jail or who has been sentenced for a felony conviction but is confined in a jail may request assignment to the work-release program at Delta Correctional Facility. Admission to the program shall be in the discretion of the sheriff. The sheriff may further authorize the offender to participate in educational or other rehabilitative programs designed to supplement his work release employment or to prepare the person for successful reentry. No offender shall be eligible for this program if he or she has more than one year remaining on his or her sentence. No person sentenced for any sex crime or multiple violent felonies in the past 10 years shall be eligible for participation in the program. The Commissioner of the Department of Corrections shall direct the facility's superintendent to identify eligible participants within 30 days of the effective date of this act.

The corporation shall collect and maintain data which shall be shared annually with the Legislature in sortable electronic

format regarding the number of participants and their classifications.

Any person who has been sentenced to confinement in jail or who has been sentenced for a felony conviction but is confined in a jail may request assignment to the pilot program established under this section. Admission to the program shall be in the discretion of the superintendent of the facility. The superintendent may further authorize the offender to participate in educational or other rehabilitative programs designed to supplement his or her work-release employment or to prepare the person for successful re-entry.

The superintendent shall adopt and publish rules and regulations prior to accepting inmates. These rules and regulations shall, at a minimum, include all requirements for work-release programs established pursuant to Sections 47-5-451 through 47-5-471. Participating employers shall pay no less than the prevailing wage for the position and shall under no circumstance pay less than the federal minimum wage.

Any inmate assigned to such a program by the superintendent who, without proper authority or just cause, leaves the area to which he or she has been assigned to work or attend educational or other rehabilitative programs, or leaves the vehicle or route of travel involved in his or her going to or returning from such place, will be guilty of escape, and shall be ineligible for further participation in a work-release program during his or her current term of confinement.

The inmate shall maintain an account through a local financial institution and shall provide a copy of a check stub to the sheriff.

The inmate shall be required to pay his or her wages earned as a participant under the programs for the following purposes:

► To pay 25% toward any support of dependents or to the Mississippi Department of Human Services on behalf of dependents as may be ordered by a judge of competent jurisdiction as well as fines, restitution, or costs as ordered by the court to include any fines and fees associated with obtaining a valid driver's license upon release. Once all the aforementioned balances have been cleared, or if no liability exists, these funds shall be added to the participant's savings diversion program.

► To save 50% of the offender's wages in the account through a local financial institution required for participation in the program. Monies shall be made available to the inmate upon parole or release.

► To pay up to 15% of the inmate's wages to the facility for administrative expenses to include transportation costs.

► The inmate shall have access to the remaining 10% of the monies in his or her account to purchase incidental expenses.

► Any monies remaining after all mandatory deductions are paid, shall be deposited in the inmate's account through a local financial institution required for participation in the program. Any monies remaining, upon the release of the inmate, shall be released to the inmate.

SB 2359. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2359 amends Section 47-7-2, to clarify that a "technical violation" shall not include a plea or sentence in an intervention court provided under Chapters 23, 25, or 27 of Title 9, Mississippi Code of 1972.

SB 2360. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2360 creates a new code section to require that immediate notification of an escape be given to the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation and local law enforcement as soon as that escape is known. If the escape occurs at a local jail or regional prison, the sheriff shall make the required notification. If the escape occurs at a state prison facility, the Mississippi Department of Corrections shall make the required notification.

SB 2704. See summary under Public Health and Welfare heading.

HB 188. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 188 creates the "Dignity and Safety for Incarcerated Women Act" to provide for the safety and privacy needs of incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities that are operated, regulated, or authorized by the Mississippi Department of Corrections to house state inmates. The act provides the following for such correctional facilities:

- Every multi-occupancy restroom, which is a space that is designated for use by multiple persons simultaneously that includes one or more toilets or urinals, as well as every changing room within a correctional facility, which is a room or area where a person may be in a state of undress in the presence of others, including a locker room or shower room, shall be designated for exclusive use of:

- ▶ Males; or
- ▶ Females.

- A restroom or changing room within a correctional facility that is designated for one sex shall be used only by members of that sex, and no incarcerated individual shall enter

a restroom or changing room that is designated for one sex unless he or she is a member of that sex.

- Each multi-occupancy sleeping quarter within a correctional facility shall be designated for exclusive use of:

- ▶ Males; or
- ▶ Females.

- A sleeping quarter within a correctional facility that is designated for one sex shall be used only by members of that sex, and no incarcerated individual shall be housed in a sleeping quarter that is designated for one sex unless he or she is a member of that sex.

Further, the bill provides that this act shall not apply to an incarcerated individual who enters a restroom, changing room, or sleeping quarter designated for the opposite sex when entering for the following purposes:

- For custodial or maintenance purposes;
- To render medical assistance;
- During a natural disaster, emergency, or when necessary to prevent a serious threat to good order or safety; or
- On a temporary basis (which shall not include overnight housing) at the direction of the correctional facility.

Finally, the bill provides that civil actions may be brought against the correctional facility for violations of the act. Specifically, an individual has a private cause of action for declaratory and injunctive relief against the correctional facility when the following occurs:

- When an incarcerated individual who is required by the correctional facility to share sleeping quarters with a person of the opposite sex in violation of this act; or

- When an individual who, while accessing a restroom or changing room designated for use by his or her sex, encounters a person of the opposite sex in that restroom or changing room in violation of this act and the following occurs:

- ▶ The correctional facility gave that person permission to use a restroom or changing room of the opposite sex; or

- ▶ The correctional facility failed to take reasonable steps to prohibit that person from using the restroom or changing room of the opposite sex.

COUNTY AFFAIRS

SB 2002. Effective on passage. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2002 amends Section 19-5-22, concerning delinquent tax hearings held by the board of supervisors. It removes a board of supervisors' authority to designate a disinterested person to serve as a hearing officer and instead allows the board to designate a hearing officer either from among its own membership, from the staff of the county, or some other qualified and impartial person. However, it prohibits the board from appointing the attorney for the board of supervisors or a member of the tax collector's office as the hearing officer. Additionally, the bill stipulates that no hearing officer may have an interest in the outcome of a hearing or be related to a board member or the person who owes delinquent fees.

DRUG POLICY

SB 2356. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2356 amends Section 41-29-113 to include 16 substances as Schedule I controlled substances because these substances have no legitimate medical use and have a high potency with great potential to cause harm. Of the 16 substances, nine substances are fentanyl derivatives scheduled as opiates, four other substances are scheduled as opiates, as well, two substances are scheduled as stimulants, and one substance is scheduled as a hallucinogenic substance.

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SB 2285. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2285 amends Section 71-5-146 to ensure that background check requirements for employees at the Mississippi Department of Employment Security who have access to, or will potentially have access to, Federal Tax Information (FTI) are consistent with and in compliance with Internal Revenue Service background investigation requirements. New language stipulates that MDES has authority to fingerprint and conduct a background investigation on any employee, contractor or subcontractor who is to be subjected to a national criminal history background check due to his or her access to FTI and any individual who applies for a position who will be subjected to a national criminal history background check due to required FTI access upon hire.

SB 2286. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2286 amends Section 71-5-353 to stipulate that certain contributions to the Workforce Enhancement Training Fund shall be suspended if the insured unemployment rate (IUR) exceeds an average of 5.5% for the three consecutive months ending on September 30 of the calendar year preceding the new rate year. Additionally, it stipulates that such suspension shall continue until such time as the three consecutive months have an IUR of less than an average of 4.5%.

SB 2290. Effective on passage, or effective date of the reauthorized federal Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act, should that act create new opportunities for pilot comprehensive innovation demonstration programs under which Mississippi qualifies, whichever date is sooner. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2290 establishes the "Task Force to Study Work Force and Social Service Reform and Implementation of a One Door Policy." The goal of the task force is to develop a recommendation to the Legislature relative to increasing the labor force participation rate in Mississippi, as well as the earning capacity of working Mississippians through training and education for high wage, high demand, priority sector jobs in the state. SB 2290 sets the membership of the task force and stipulates that the task force shall meet within 45 days of the effective date. Upon finalization of findings, the task force must make a report to the Legislature on or before December 1, and the task force shall be resolved upon presentation of its report.

The task force is charged with studying the following issues:

- Unfilled jobs in the State of Mississippi, record low unemployment rate and yet a lagging labor force participation rate under 58% as measured by the United States Bureau of Labor and Statistics;
- Modernization of Mississippi's economy with an increasing need to access high-quality education and training programs across avenues from K-12, community college, universities, private sector and adult education opportunities;
- Technology utilization for state government agencies to share information and have a unified vision between agencies for

a one-door access for state resources and services to individuals of the state seeking employment, government assistance, or education to pursue higher per capita employment;

- Investigate a centralized location, including a clearing house of available public assistance programs, how to access it and eligibility requirements;

- How reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) by the United States Congress may create new opportunities to grant states to pilot comprehensive innovation demonstration programs; and

- An integrated system of workforce and social services may more effectively serve Mississippians in escaping poverty through targeted supports and work to achieve dignity and self-sufficiency and strengthen Mississippi's economy.

SB 2357. See summary under Corrections heading.

HB 1414. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1414 amends Sections 71-5-353, 37-153-7 and 71-5-453, to provide that the Mississippi Office of Workforce Development shall administer and oversee the Mississippi Workforce Enhancement Training Fund (WET Fund). This change removes the requirement that the office collaborate with the Mississippi Community College Board on the administration of the WET Fund. The bill also provides that the individual community and junior colleges shall be the primary entities to facilitate training. Additionally, the bill includes the Mississippi Department of Education in the requirement that certain agencies that are implementing or coordinating state-funded workforce development programs under state law cooperate with each other to promote effective workforce training in Mississippi, under the direction of the office.

EDUCATION

SB 2177. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2177 amends Section 37-31-13 to expand the availability of payments from state appropriations to school districts for extended contracts for vocational agriculture education services and other related vocational education services contributing to economic development. Under current law, such payments are available only to high schools whose teachers of vocational programs are responsible for certain designated programs of instruction during the months between the academic years. The amendment makes the payments available when the designated programs of instruction take place during the days or weeks between academic years or, for school districts having adopted the extended school year calendar, between academic quarters.

SB 2181. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2181 amends Section 37-11-51 to exempt school district test security plans for the administration of the Statewide Student Assessment Program from the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983.

SB 2247. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/7/25.

SB 2247 amends Section 29-3-63 to authorize the school board of the Hattiesburg Public School District to grant the holder of a valid 99-year lease, which is free of any outstanding financial obligation and has less than 30 years remaining on the original term, an extension for no more than 25 years, on terms acceptable to the school board.

HB 246. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

HB 246 amends Sections 29-3-29 and 57-75-37 relating to the management of mineral rights on sixteenth section lands that have been developed for industrial purposes.

Section 29-3-29 is amended to provide an exception under Section 57-75-34(7)(f) to the standard reservation of mineral rights in, on, and under sixteenth section lands sold for industrial purposes.

Section 57-75-37 is amended to authorize the school board controlling sixteenth section lands sold for industrial purposes, the local superintendent of education, and the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), acting in concert, to sell and convey all minerals in, on, and under such lands for adequate consideration. Alternatively, the school board, superintendent, and MDA may enter into a written agreement with the enterprise owning or operating a project as defined in Section 57-75-5(f)(xxxi) providing for the perpetual waiver of the right to use the surface of such lands for mineral exploration or production, notwithstanding the state's retention of an ownership interest in the minerals.

HB 809. Effective on passage. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 809 amends Section 37-15-29 to expand and clarify school enrollment options for children of certain military and civilian personnel. The amendments allow children of parents or legal guardians on active duty or Active Guard and Reserve duty (excluding inactive duty training) with the U.S. Armed Forces to enroll in any school district and campus of their choosing, regardless of the child's residence. The bill clarifies that the definitions of the terms "active duty" and "Active Guard and Reserve duty" refer to full-time duty. Further, it specifies the required documentation, including a Department of Defense

photo ID and a "Statement of Service" from a ranking official, which must be presented to the selected school before the child may be enrolled there.

HB 962. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 962 reenacts Sections 37-69-1 through 37-69-7, the Energy Academy Act, which authorizes the Vicksburg-Warren and Claiborne County School Districts to partner with a nuclear facility, Warren County, and the State of Mississippi for the establishment of an Energy High School Academy. The bill creates new Section 37-69-9 to codify and extend the date of the repealer on the Energy Academy Act, while also amending Section 5, Chapter 482, Laws of 2019, as amended by Section 5, Chapter 382, Laws of 2022, to remove the repealer language from the effective date section of the enabling legislation.

HB 1066. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1066 amends Section 37-135-31, known as the "Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children," to correct references to the United States Code pertaining to active duty orders for National Guard and Reserve members. The original text referenced "10 USC, Sections 1209 and 1211." The amendment changes this to "10 USC, Chapters 1209 and 1211," accurately pointing to the relevant chapters in the United States Code.

ELECTIONS

SB 2657. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2657 allows the board of supervisors, in their discretion, to pay election commissioners an additional \$35 for their work on election day.

SB 2659. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/13/25.

SB 2659 amends the qualification deadlines for special elections or school board elections. This bill increases the time before a special or school board election that an individual must file his or her signed petition by 15 days. This means candidates running in a special or school board election must file their petition between 105 and 75 days before an election. If the 75th day before a special or school board election falls on a weekend or legal holiday, the petition and affidavit required shall be filed by 5:00 p.m. on the business day immediately following the weekend or legal holiday.

HB 289. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 289 amends Section 23-15-213 to revise the staggered terms of election commissioners in Districts Two and Four. Those election commissioners from Districts Two and Four and elected in the 2027 election shall be elected for a three-year term, and those election commissioners from Districts Two and Four shall be elected in the 2030 election and shall serve for a four-year term and have a new election every four years thereafter.

HB 291. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/24/25.

HB 291 amends Section 23-15-193 to require all candidates running in the state general election to secure the majority

vote to be elected. Sections 23-15-601 and 23-15-951 are amended to conform.

HB 293. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 293 amends Section 23-15-1031 to revise the time for holding primary elections for representatives in the Congress of the United States in years without a presidential election from the first Tuesday in June to the second Tuesday in March. Section 23-15-299 is amended to conform by changing the qualification deadline from 60 days before the presidential preference primary to 75 days before the congressional preference primary, and to provide that no assessments may be paid before December 1 of the year before the primary election for the office is held. The bill also amends Section 23-15-359 to conform.

Additionally, the bill creates a new section of law that provides the times for nominating and qualifying for the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee Districts, which shall match the times of the congressional preference primaries. Lastly, the bill repeals Section 8, Chapter 12, Laws of 1928, which provides for the dates of nominations for Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee Commissioners.

HB 724. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 724 amends Section 97-13-13 to provide that if any person assisting an elector with voting in accordance with Section 23-15-907 willfully fails to transmit the ballot that was mailed to the elector with the intent of the ballot not being cast and counted in the election, the person shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be imprisoned in the county jail for not more than one year, and subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000.

HB 811. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

- HB 811 amends Section 23-15-299 to provide that in order to qualify to run for office, a candidate must submit, along with the qualification fees, an affidavit under penalty of perjury, and such affidavit shall require the candidate to certify that he or she meets all qualifications for the office for which he or she is a candidate.

- ▶ The bill also requires the Secretary of State to assess a \$500 fine to any state executive committee that fails to transmit any written statements and other required documents and accompanying fees to the Secretary of State by 6:00 p.m. on the date of the qualifying deadline; however, such fines assessed to a state executive committee shall not exceed \$2,500 for a particular qualifying deadline.

- ▶ Changes to this section also provide that if a candidate has voted in any election outside of the jurisdiction in which he or she seeks to represent during the period in which the candidate is required to have resided within the jurisdiction, the name of such candidate shall not appear on the ballot unless redistricting has changed a candidate's jurisdiction and would otherwise make him or her ineligible to run as a candidate in the jurisdiction where he or she currently resides.

- ▶ A timeline is also included in this section that provides when the proper executive committee, or the Secretary of State, whichever is applicable, must make the determination regarding whether a candidate is qualified for the office he or she seeks.

- Section 23-15-961 is amended to conform to the preceding section, and to provide that a candidate who has been

disqualified under Section 23-15-299 may file a petition for judicial review.

- The bill amends Section 23-15-359 to provide that a petition required under the section or any other petition for a special election, shall be accompanied by a statement, on a form prescribed by the Secretary of State, containing the name and physical address of the candidate, the email address of the candidate, if any, and the office he or she seeks. Each statement shall also require the candidate to certify that he or she meets all the qualifications to hold the office he or she seeks.

- ▶ This section also provides that a candidate aggrieved by the decision of the appropriate election commission, which must make its decision within five days of the hearing, may file a petition for judicial review to the circuit court of the county in which the election commission whose decision is being reviewed sits. The process for that judicial review is provided.

- Lastly, the bill amends Section 23-15-1093 to change the deadline to qualify to run for president from January 1 through January 15 to November 15 through December 15.

HB 1419. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1419 amends Sections 23-15-557, 23-15-281, 23-15-285, 23-15-35, 23-15-115, 19-3-1, 21-9-59 and 23-15-283 to provide that the location of a polling place shall not be altered within 60 days of any primary, general, runoff or special election unless exigent circumstances exist. If the board of supervisors or governing authorities find that exigent circumstances exist where a polling place needs to be altered within 60 days of an election, then their reasons for making that decision shall be spread upon the minutes at their next scheduled meeting. When

the location of a polling place is altered within 60 days of an election, public notice of the change shall be posted at city hall, the courthouse, the registrar's office, the previous polling place location if it is a public building, and for three consecutive weeks, or each week before the election if the alteration happens within three weeks of the election in a newspaper that is circulated in the area.

ENERGY

SB 2368. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2368 amends penalties to the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Standards in Section 77-11-3 from a maximum penalty of \$1,000 for any single violation and \$200,000 for any series of violations to "a civil penalty not more than the maximum civil penalty provided pursuant to 49 USC Section 60122 and 49 CFR 190.223."

HB 1186. Section 8 effective 7/1/25; remaining sections effective 7/1/26. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1186 requires all K-12 schools, public and private, to annually perform a pressure test on the natural gas piping system in school facilities, beginning in 2026. The results of the test must be reported to the school's natural gas supplier before the beginning of each school year unless a school operates on a year-round calendar, in which case the test must be performed and results reported before July 1. The bill prescribes certain requirements for the test, including that it be performed by a qualified plumber to determine whether the natural gas piping downstream of the school's meter holds at least normal operating pressure over a period to be specified by the Public Service Commission. The school must notify the supplier of the date and results of the test, and the supplier must maintain a copy of those results for at least one year after receiving them. If the supplier receives official notification of a hazardous natural gas leakage or that a required test at a school facility has not been performed, the supplier must discontinue service to that school facility. The results of the annual test in public schools and other schools accredited by the State Board of Education also must be reported

to the State Department of Education. If a leakage in a school facility is identified, the testing firm or individual must report the leakage to the local school board, as well as the department, or to the person responsible for a nonpublic school.

Section 8 of the bill provides that before January 1, 2026, the Public Service Commission shall promulgate rules necessary to implement the school natural gas pressure testing requirements, which will be applicable beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

HB 1191. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1191 revises certain requirements applicable to excavators and utility operators in regard to underground and submerged utility lines and facilities. The bill amends Section 77-13-3 to revise various definitions and define additional terms, particularly in regard to submerged facilities, which are underground facilities or utility lines that normally are submerged under a body of water.

The bill also amends Section 77-13-5 to revise the notice requirements for excavators before beginning an excavation and to establish specific notice requirements for submerged excavations. The maximum proposed time within which an excavator reasonably believes a project may be completed is increased from 14 to 20 calendar days. Pre-marking of a proposed excavation may be done by electronic pre-marking and may not exceed the actual area of excavation; pre-marking is not required for excavations on property owned by the excavator where the proposed excavation area can be defined clearly in the locate request ticket. Markings provided by operators are valid for 20 days, increased from 14, from the date of the locate request ticket, and an excavator must notify Mississippi 811, Inc., if remarks are necessary when markings are no longer

visible. Notice requirements are waived for excavations occurring as the result of electric power generation activities that are confined to the immediate secured property of the facility and not on an operator's marked right-of-way or easement. This section also prescribes certain requirements for excavations within the tolerance zone, which is defined as a strip of land 18 inches, plus 1/2 of the diameter of the underground facility, if the diameter is marked, from the outside edge of both sides of the marks on the horizontal plane.

New requirements addressing submerged excavations are added to Section 77-13-5. Excavators must give at least seven days notice to Mississippi 811, Inc., before beginning a submerged excavation; however, before giving such notice, an excavator must pre-mark the approximate boundary of the proposed excavation area. The markings and locate request ticket are valid for 30 days from the date the locate request ticket is processed in the Mississippi 811, Inc., system, which must be renewed at least seven working days before expiration. Renewal notices are also valid for 30 days. A renewal notice may not include areas in which the excavator has completed the excavation work. Excavation in a marine exclusion zone requires consent from the operators with submerged facilities, and the operators may not unreasonably hold the consent.

The bill also amends Section 77-13-9 to establish different timeframes, which vary according to the type of excavation, for utility operators to locate and mark underground lines and facilities and submerged facilities after receiving notice of an excavation. Unless otherwise agreed to by an excavator and underground or submerged facility operator, the timeframes, from the time the locate request ticket is processed, are as follows:

- For standard excavations, three working days.

- For submerged excavations, seven working days.
- For emergency excavations, two hours.
- For impending emergency excavations, before the start time of excavation provided in the locate request ticket.

Excavators must inspect the site for the presence of marks and evidence of unmarked underground utility lines before and during an excavation.

Section 77-13-11 is amended to require an excavator making an emergency excavation to provide the contact information of the person at the site who is available to discuss the excavation with operators.

The bill creates new Section 77-13-12 to authorize an excavator that is planning a large project excavation (defined as a project that, due to the large area or complexity of the project, cannot be completed in 20 calendar days or for submerged excavations, 30 calendar days) to request a preconstruction meeting with operators and other interested parties. Notice of such a meeting must include certain specified information. The parties participating in the meeting may execute an agreement establishing terms and timeframes for the project, which the excavator must adhere to in performing the excavation work. If an agreement is not reached, the large project designation is considered null and void, and the excavator must comply with the applicable ordinary excavation requirements.

Lastly, Section 77-13-17 is amended to require operators of submerged facilities to be a member of Mississippi 811, Inc., and to comply with the requirements applicable to underground utility lines and facilities.

ENVIRONMENT PROT, CONS AND WATER RES

SB 2250. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2250 amends code sections concerning asbestos abatement certification.

SB 2250 deletes definitions for "abatement," "air monitor," "asbestos-containing materials," "contractor," "inspector," "management plan," "management planner," "operations and maintenance program," "project designer," "school," "school building," "supervisor," and "worker."

Additionally, SB 2250 allows applicants for an asbestos management planner certificate and a project designer certificate who have attained certification as certified industrial hygienists, or the equivalent in a related scientific field, to use that certification in meeting application requirements.

Finally, SB 2250 allows applicants for an asbestos management planner certificate, a project designer certificate, an air monitor certificate, a contractor certificate, an asbestos abatement supervisor certificate, an inspector certificate, and a worker certificate to have satisfactorily completed an asbestos program authorized by the United States EPA in lieu of completing a commission-approved training course in their field.

FINANCE

SB 2052. See summary under Veterans and Military Affairs heading.

SB 2143. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2143 revises the definition of "qualified resort area" in the Local Option Alcoholic Beverage Control Law to modify the boundaries of a couple of existing resort areas and to add several others.

Item 15 is amended to expand an area near Mississippi State University, but outside Starkville.

Item 82 expands the resort area at the Philadelphia Country Club to include not only the clubhouse, but the entire country club property.

The following resort areas are added:

Pontotoc Country Club (item 93);

A plot of land in the southwest corner of Rankin County (item 94);

The City of Poplarville (item 95);

The Town of Mathison (item 96); and

The Tabb House, a historical landmark being restored as an event center in the City of Houston (item 97).

For all of the newly added resort areas, the governing municipality or, in the case of item 94, county may control the hours, percentage of revenue from food sales, and locations of establishments with on-premises retailer's permits.

The bill also amends Section 67-1-57 to provide that a felony conviction, other than a crime of violence or a violation of state or federal controlled substance laws, does not automatically disqualify a person from being approved for an alcoholic beverage permit. If at least 10 years have elapsed

since conviction, the Department of Revenue may consider such felony convictions in determining whether all other qualifications are met.

SB 2145. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 2/26/25.

SB 2145 authorizes in-state and out-of-state wine manufacturers to sell and ship wine directly to consumers and fulfillment providers in Mississippi, if the winery obtains a direct wine shipper's permit from the Department of Revenue. The bill provides for the issuance and annual renewal of direct wine shipper's permits.

The holder of a direct wine shipper's permit is required to keep certain records and report certain information to the department on a quarterly basis and is prohibited from selling or shipping light wine or beer, or any alcoholic beverage other than wine, and from selling and shipping wine contracted through Mississippi distributors, brokers, and solicitors, except highly allocated items. The amount of wine that a holder of a direct wine shipper's permit may sell or ship annually to any one address is limited to 12 nine-liter cases. Persons purchasing or receiving wine from a direct wine shipper must be at least 21 years of age and shall use the wine for personal consumption only and may not resell it.

The Commissioner of Revenue is authorized to adopt any rules or regulations as necessary to carry out this act. A sale or shipment in violation of this act is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or both. In addition, a violation of this act may subject the holder of a direct wine shipper's permit to suspension or revocation of the permit by the Department of Revenue. If a consumer is otherwise compliant with this act and reasonably believes a shipment is in

accordance with the permits and regulatory requirements established by the state, the consumer shall not be subject to penalties merely for receiving a shipment that is deemed to be in violation of the act.

Section 67-1-51 is amended to provide for the direct wine shipper's permit and the wine fulfillment provider's permit. Section 27-71-5 is amended to provide a privilege tax of \$100 for the issuance of each of these permits.

Section 27-71-7 is amended to add a new subsection (3) to levy on a direct wine shipper a tax of 15.5% of the sales price of each sale and shipment of wine made to a Mississippi resident. The direct wine shipper must file with the Department of Revenue a monthly report, along with a copy of the invoice for each sale and shipment of wine, and remit any taxes due. A late fee of \$50 is imposed for failure to timely file and pay taxes. Section 27-71-29 is amended to require that the 15.5% tax levied under Section 27-71-7(3) be paid into the General Fund, except for an amount equivalent to the 3% markup levied on alcoholic beverages sold by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Division under Section 27-71-7(2), which shall be paid into the Mental Health Programs Fund.

Section 67-1-53 is amended to exempt applicants for direct wine shipper's permits from notice and publication requirements. Section 67-1-55 is amended to exempt applicants for direct wine shipper's permits from financial interest disclosure requirements. Section 67-1-57 is amended to exempt managers employed by the holder of a direct wine shipper's permit from the requirement that all managers be approved by the Department of Revenue prior to completing any managerial tasks on behalf of a permittee and must possess all of the qualifications required of a permittee, and to provide that the department may waive the fingerprint requirement for direct wine shipper's permit

applicants. Section 67-1-73 is amended to authorize the Department of Revenue to prescribe the form and content of information regarding the sales, shipment, delivery, and transportation of wine by direct wine shippers.

Conforming amendments are made to Sections 27-71-15, 67-1-41, 67-1-45, 97-31-47, and 97-31-49.

SB 2266. See summary under Agriculture heading.

SB 2303. See summary under Public Property heading.

SB 2555. Effective on passage. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2555 amends Section 67-5-11 to authorize any native winery to make sales to the Department of Revenue or to consumers at one satellite location in the county of the native winery's original location.

SB 2729. See summary under Public Health and Welfare heading.

SB 2802. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

SB 2802 amends Section 83-34-4 to revise the distribution of monies derived from the nonadmitted policy fee remitted to the Mississippi Windstorm Underwriting Association. Of such monies, \$12,000,000 shall be remitted annually to the association, and \$500,000 shall be deposited annually into the Mississippi First Responders Health and Safety Trust Fund created in Section 25-15-41. The remainder shall be deposited as follows: 40% into the Rural Fire Truck Fund created in Section 17-23-1; 30% into the Municipal Fire Protection Fund created in Section 83-1-37; and 30% into the County Volunteer Fire Department Fund created in Section 83-1-39.

Conforming amendments are made to Sections 83-1-37 and 83-1-39.

SB 2805. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/24/25.

SB 2805 amends Section 27-65-23.1 to include the gross proceeds or gross income of third-party facilitators within the scope of any tax levied on the gross proceeds or gross income from room rentals of hotels or motels under the authority of a local and private law.

The bill makes a conforming amendment to Section 41-49-3 for sales tax purposes only, not for purposes of subjecting third-party facilitators to State Board of Health regulations.

SB 2846. Effective on passage. Signed 3/13/25.

SB 2846 amends Section 17-25-27 to revise the definition of "economic development project" to include a qualified project, as defined in Section 57-114-3 of the Mississippi Flexible Tax Incentive Act. This definition applies to the authority of county boards of supervisors or municipal governing authorities to enter agreements with economic development projects, which shall be binding on future county boards or municipal authorities, to provide water, sewer, or other services, or to agree in advance to approve any request for a 10-year ad valorem tax exemption in the manner provided by law.

The bill also authorizes counties and municipalities to enter into agreements with business entities to, either individually or cooperatively, fund or reimburse the businesses for costs incurred in connection with certain development or redevelopment projects solely using revenues derived from the projects. Under such an agreement, one or more local governments may use project revenues to pay any costs of a project, and/or the business may undertake or otherwise fund all or any part of a project or any facilities related to a project using private funds, with the local government(s) reimbursing the business for its costs incurred solely using project

revenues. The local government(s) may place appropriate conditions on payments or reimbursements to protect the public interest, and such payments or reimbursements may not exceed \$5,000,000.

All such agreements must be submitted to the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) as a condition for its effectiveness. The MDA shall determine whether the agreement is in proper form and compatible with state law, and whether the agreement and project are appropriate for the issuance of an initial certificate of public convenience and necessity to the local government(s). If the MDA does not disapprove an agreement within 60 days of its submission, the agreement shall be approved by default.

Agreements authorized by this act may not exceed 20 years and shall bind future county boards of supervisors and municipal governing authorities.

SB 2851. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2851 amends Section 67-1-51 to provide that, where an on-premises retailer's permit is issued to an establishment located in a qualified resort area created by Section 67-1-5(o)(iii)18, persons in the permitted premises are allowed to bring alcoholic beverages into the premises and to possess, store, and consume those beverages in the premises.

The section is also amended to provide that the distance restrictions prohibiting the sale or storage for sale of alcoholic beverages within 400 feet of any church, school (excluding colleges or universities), kindergarten or funeral home, or 100 feet for areas zoned commercial or business, shall not apply to the qualified resort areas defined in Section 67-1-5(o)(iii)83 and 84.

The last amendment to the section eliminates the wine fulfillment provider's permit provided for in Senate Bill No. 2145, 2025 Regular Session. Section 1 of Senate Bill No. 2145 is amended to remove references to the permit and to provide instead that fulfillment providers shall obtain the same direct wine shipper's permit required for wine manufacturers wishing to ship wine to consumers in the state.

Finally, Section 9 of Senate Bill No. 2145 is amended to change the penalty for violation of the direct wine shipment law from a misdemeanor criminal penalty to a civil penalty.

SB 2854. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2854 amends Section 57-26-1 to revise the definitions of "tourism project" and "resort development" to increase the minimum private investment amounts required under the Tourism Project Incentive Program.

For a tourism project: (1) a hotel's minimum private investment is increased from \$40 million to \$50 million, and, to be included within that threshold, the minimum private investment per guest room is increased from \$150,000 to \$200,000; and (2) a full-service hotel's minimum private investment is increased from \$15 million to \$20 million, and, to be included within that threshold, the minimum private investment per guest room is increased from \$200,000 to \$250,000, except for full-service hotels located in certain counties, for which the minimum private investment per guest room is increased from \$150,000 to \$200,000. Added to this exception is the county in which the Marty Stuart Congress of Country Music is located.

For a resort development, the minimum private investment is increased from \$100 million to \$200 million, and the percentage of the private investment amount that may be expended on

facilities to house retail activity is decreased from 40% to 30%.

Section 57-26-3 is amended to increase, from 15 years to 20 years, the potential time in which the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) may make incentive payments from the Tourism Project Sales Tax Incentive Fund.

Section 57-26-7 is amended to reauthorize the MDA to approve applications for projects that include resort developments, and to extend the application deadline to June 30, 2027.

SB 2857. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2857 amends Section 57-1-18 to increase, from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000, the grant amount that may be awarded by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) to a small municipality or limited population county from the Small Municipalities and Limited Population Counties Fund during any grant period established by the MDA.

SB 3165. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

SB 3165 authorizes the issuance of bonds as follows:

Section 1 authorizes the issuance of \$20 million in state general obligation bonds for the Mississippi Site Development Grant Fund.

Section 2 makes a conforming amendment to Section 51-1-701 to acknowledge the monies from those new bonds going into the Site Development Grant Fund.

Section 3 authorizes the issuance of \$10 million in state general obligation bonds for the ACE Fund.

Section 4 amends Section 57-61-25 to increase by \$25 million the general obligation bonds that may be issued under the Mississippi Business Investment Act. (The purposes of this additional \$25 million are set out in Sections 5 and 6.)

Section 5 amends Section 57-61-36 to increase by \$5 million the bond proceeds that MDA may use under the Mississippi Business Investment Act to make grants or loans to municipalities through an equipment and public facilities grant and loan fund to aid in infrastructure-related improvements, the purchase of equipment, and the purchase, construction or repair and renovation of public facilities.

Section 6 amends Section 57-61-41 to increase by \$20 million the bond proceeds that MDA may use under the Mississippi Business Investment Act to make loans to counties, municipalities, or state, county or municipal port and airport authorities through a port, airport and rail revitalization revolving loan fund for the improvement of port and airport facilities, or for publicly owned freight rail service projects, to promote commerce and economic growth.

Section 7 amends Section 57-75-15 to increase by \$5 million the general obligation bonds that may be issued under the Mississippi Major Economic Impact Act (MMEIA) for projects designed to enhance facilities that are at risk for closure under federal law (especially the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990). It also removes the reverter on the authority of the State Bond Commission to determine the appropriate method for the sale of certain bonds and to negotiate their sale.

Section 8 amends chapter laws to increase by \$20 million the general obligation bonds that may be issued for the Mississippi Industry Incentive Financing Revolving Fund. It also extends to July 1, 2029, the period of time in which bonds may be issued for that fund.

Section 9 amends Section 65-4-25 to increase by \$1 million the bonds authorized to be issued under the Economic Development Highway Act to provide funding for a high economic benefit

project as defined in Section 65-4-5(1)(c)(v) ("Any project which would benefit from the construction of any highway bypass which would aid in economic development and would provide an alternate route to avoid an existing route which underpasses a railroad and which would aid in existing or proposed industry").

SB 3166. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/27/25.

SB 3166 amends Section 27-35-50 to direct the Department of Revenue, when promulgating its annual table of inflation factors for industrial property, to include commercial solar and wind facilities as a separate category of industrial property. The bill requires the department to set such inflation factor at 1.000, if Marshall Valuation Service has not provided an inflation factor for commercial solar and wind facilities for a particular year.

HB 1. Sections 1-13 and 25-29 effective 7/1/25, and Sections 15-24 effective 3/1/26.

HB 1 revises various sections of law relating to income tax, sales tax, use tax, fuel excise taxes, and the Public Employees' Retirement System of Mississippi (PERS).

Section 1 amends Section 27-7-5 to reduce the tax rate on taxable income of individuals in excess of \$10,000 to 3.75% in 2027, 3.5% in 2028, 3.25% in 2029, and 3% in 2030 and thereafter, except as provided in Section 2.

Section 2 creates a new code section in the income tax chapter (Chapter 7, Title 27, Mississippi Code of 1972) to provide that, starting in 2031, there may be further reductions in the tax on individual income in excess of \$10,000, if certain conditions are met. First, the Working Cash-Stabilization Reserve Fund must be fully funded as provided in Section 27-103-213. Second, Adjusted General Fund Revenue Collections must

exceed Appropriations by at least 0.85% of the "cost of a 1% cut."

For purposes of Section 2:

- "Adjusted General Fund Revenue Collections" means State General Fund revenue collections adjusted by removing any nonrecurring State General Fund revenue collections.
- "Appropriations" means the total amount contained in all deficit appropriations bills that are recurring expenses in State Support Funds and all General Fund appropriation bills passed into law, but not including any additional appropriations in excess of statutory required employer rate for PERS.
- "Cost of a 1% cut" means the reduction in individual income tax collections that would result from a 1% reduction in the tax on all taxable income of individuals in excess of \$10,000.

Adjusted General Fund Revenue Collections will be based on the prior fiscal year, while Appropriations will be based on the current fiscal year. Those two numbers will be provided by the Legislative Budget Office (LBO) to the Commissioner of Revenue by October 1 (beginning October 1, 2029, for fiscal year 2029 revenue collections and fiscal year 2030 appropriations).

The Commissioner of Revenue will calculate the cost of a 1% cut, based on data from the prior calendar year, and provide it to LBO by December 15 (beginning December 15, 2029, based on data from calendar year 2028).

The Appropriations number will be subtracted from the Adjusted General Fund Revenue Collections number. In comparing the difference to the cost of a 1% tax cut:

- If the difference is at least 0.85%, but less than 1%, of the cost of a 1% cut, the tax will be reduced by 0.2%;

- If the difference is at least 1%, but less than 1.15%, of the cost of a 1% cut, the tax will be reduced by 0.25%; and

- If the difference is at least 1.15% of the cost of a 1% cut, the tax will be reduced by 0.3%.

Section 2 will be in force until the tax on individual income in excess of \$10,000 is 0%, at which point such tax will be eliminated.

Section 3 amends Section 27-65-17 to reduce the sales tax on groceries from 7% to 5%.

Section 4 amends Section 27-65-241 to make a conforming amendment to remove the grocery tax exception to the City of Jackson's authority to levy a 1% sales tax on activities taxed at 7%. Because groceries will no longer be taxed at 7%, the continued inclusion of this exception would be obsolete.

Section 5 brings forward Section 27-67-5, which levies the use tax, without amendment.

Section 6 amends Section 27-55-11 to increase the excise tax on gasoline from 18¢ to 21¢ per gallon on July 1, 2025, 24¢ per gallon on July 1, 2026, and 27¢ per gallon on July 1, 2027. The tax rate will be indexed on July 1, 2029, and on July 1 of every other year thereafter.

Sections 7 and 8 amend Sections 27-55-519 and 27-55-521 to make the same adjustments as Section 6, but for certain special fuels, including diesel fuels and kerosene.

Sections 9 and 10 amend Sections 27-55-12 and 27-55-523 to make conforming amendments to certain references to special fuels previously taxed at 18¢ per gallon. Those special fuels will be subject to a new rate that periodically increases, so a different way of referencing those fuels is needed. Because all of those fuels are subject to a potential future reduction on a

date specified in Section 65-39-35, this becomes the new way to reference those fuels.

Section 11 amends Section 27-5-101 to provide for the apportionment of the revenue from the portion of the excise tax on gasoline and special fuels above 18¢ per gallon. From such collections, 23.25% will go to the Office of State Aid Road Construction, 2.75% will go to the Strategic Multi-Modal Investments Fund, and 74% will go to the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) for constructing, maintaining, or improving segments of highways and bridges under its jurisdiction, and for operational improvements on such segments, in accordance with a project schedule as reported in the three-year plan as adopted, amended, or reissued by the Mississippi Transportation Commission under Section 56-1-141.

Section 12 amends Section 27-65-75 to adjust the distribution of revenue from the excise tax on gasoline and special fuels that is apportioned under Section 27-5-101(a)(ii)1 (existing law) and (iii) (added in Section 11 of this bill). Under subsection (4), on the following dates, the following amounts shall be deposited to the credit of the State Aid Road Fund:

- On or before September 15, 2025, and monthly thereafter through August 15, 2026, \$5,000,000 or an amount equal to 23.25% of those funds, whichever is greater;
- On or before September 15, 2026, and monthly thereafter through August 15, 2027, \$6,500,000 or an amount equal to 23.25% of those funds, whichever is greater; and
- On or before September 15, 2027, and monthly thereafter, \$8,000,000 or an amount equal to 23.25% of those funds, whichever is greater.

Section 12 also adjusts the distribution of sales tax revenue after the application of the 5% grocery tax. The current distribution rates to the following entities are maintained, except that revenue collected from the grocery sales tax is distributed at higher rates, as follows (referenced by subsection in Section 27-65-75):

- (1) (a) For sales in a municipality, 18.5% of general sales tax revenue, and 25.9% of grocery tax revenue, to the municipality;
- (1) (b) For sales on the campus of a state institution of higher learning or a community or junior college not located in a municipality, 18.5% of general sales tax revenue, and 25.9% of grocery tax revenue, to the institution;
- (1) (c) For sales in the City of Jackson, 9% of general sales tax revenue, and 12.6% of grocery tax revenue, to the Capitol Complex Improvement District Project Fund;
- (1) (d) For sales in a Tax Increment Financing redevelopment project area, 18.5% of general sales tax revenue, and 25.9% of grocery tax revenue, to the county in which the project is located;
- (7) 2.266% of general sales tax revenue, and 3.17% of grocery tax revenue, to the School Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund until the total amount deposited into that fund in a fiscal year reaches \$42,000,000, after which the excess shall go to the Education Enhancement Fund; and
- (8) 9.073% of general sales tax revenue, and 12.7% of grocery tax revenue, to the Education Enhancement Fund.

Section 13 amends Section 27-67-31 to adjust the distribution of use tax revenue after the application of the 5% grocery tax. The current distribution rate of 15% to municipalities and 15% to counties for infrastructure is

maintained, but revenue collected from the use tax corresponding to the 5% grocery sales tax is excluded from this rate and is instead distributed at 21% to municipalities and 21% to counties.

Section 14 amends Section 27-67-35 to provide that monies in a special fund consisting of use tax revenue distributions to be expended by municipalities for infrastructure may also be expended for the acquisition and/or rehabilitation of buildings.

Sections 15-23 create a new section in the PERS article (Article 3, Chapter 11, Title 25, Mississippi Code of 1972) and amend Sections 25-11-103, 25-11-109, 25-11-111, 25-11-112, 25-11-114, 25-11-115, 25-11-117, and 25-11-123 to create a new Tier 5 in PERS for state employees hired on or after March 1, 2026. Tier 5 includes a defined-contribution component in the form of a 401(a) plan, to which 5% of the participant's total earned compensation will be applied. The other 4% of the participant's total earned compensation will be applied to the traditional defined-benefit plan. Except for an amount up to 0.2% of total earned compensation assessed by the PERS board for administrative expenses, the employer's contribution will be applied to the unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) of PERS. The vesting period is eight years, and retirement eligibility begins at age 62, or after the completion of 35 years of service, regardless of age. The retirement annuity will be 1% of the average compensation (defined as the average of the eight highest consecutive years or the last 96 consecutive months of earned compensation, whichever is greater) for each year of service. For members retiring before age 65 and without having completed at least 30 years of service, there will be an actuarial reduction for each year of creditable service below 30 years or the number of years in age that the member is below 65, whichever is less. There will be no

entitlement to a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), although the Legislature may provide one for a specific year. There will be no partial lump sum option (PLSO). The surviving spouse of a member who dies before retirement will receive an allowance if the member was vested with at least eight years of service.

Section 24 amends Section 25-11-305 to close the Supplemental Legislative Retirement Plan (SLRP) to new members. Legislators elected on or after March 1, 2026, will be members of PERS Tier 5.

Sections 25-28 involve the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) for employees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). Section 25 makes a minor technical amendment to Section 25-11-401, and Section 26 brings forward Section 25-11-409 without amendment. Sections 27-28 amend Section 25-11-411 and repeal Section 25-11-415 to close the ORP to members employed on or after March 1, 2026, and to reform it for members employed before that date. IHL employees hired on or after March 1, 2026, will be members of PERS Tier 5. For existing ORP members, employee contributions will be decoupled from the PERS rate and set at 9% of total earned compensation. The employer's contribution will remain tied to the PERS rate but reallocated. Of the employer's contribution, 14.9% of total earned compensation for members employed before July 1, 2025, and up to 9% of total earned compensation for members employed on or after July 1, 2025, but before March 1, 2026, will go to the member's account. Up to 0.2% of total earned compensation will go to the expense fund for ORP administrative costs. The remainder will be applied to the UAAL of PERS. Also, the employer may make additional discretionary contributions to member accounts up to the maximum amount allowable under federal law.

HB 598. Effective 7/1/25. Law without Governor's
Signature 4/1/25.

HB 598 amends Section 25-7-65 to revise fee schedules for publishing documents in a newspaper as required by law. The bill limits the current charge of 12¢ for each word contained for the first insertion, and 10¢ for each word for each subsequent insertion required by law, to publications on behalf of a public body. The fees for publishing any summons, order, citation, advertisement, or notice for any other party shall be 25¢ for each word it contains for the first insertion, and 23¢ for each word for each subsequent insertion required by law, and shall increase each year starting July 1, 2026, at a rate comparable to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Additionally, the fee for making proof of publication, making a copy thereof, and depositing to the same is increased from \$3 to \$5.

HB 733. See summary under Municipalities heading.

HB 812. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 812 amends Section 27-33-75 to extend the homestead exemption from all ad valorem taxes for homeowners who are honorably discharged American veterans and at least 90 years of age to the unremarried surviving spouses of such homeowners. It also extends the homestead exemption for qualified homeowners classified as totally disabled under the federal Social Security Act, Railroad Retirement Act, or any other federal act approved by the Department of Revenue to the unremarried surviving spouses of such homeowners.

HB 916. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/20/25.

HB 916 requires the Commissioner of Revenue ("commissioner") to establish directories for purposes related

to regulating the sale of cigarettes and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) products.

Cigarettes

The bill provides that, before September 1 of each year, each cigarette manufacturer whose cigarettes are sold in this state, whether directly or through an importer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or similar intermediary, must execute and deliver a certification to the commissioner, accompanied by a fee in an amount prescribed by the commissioner, certifying that the manufacturer is in compliance with the provisions of the bill. Each certification must include:

- A list of the manufacturer's brand families sold in Mississippi, which must be updated by executing and delivering to the commissioner a supplemental certification no later than 30 days before any addition to or modification of the list is to take effect;
- Verification that the manufacturer possesses all orders required by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which must be current, for the manufacture and sale of the cigarettes included in the manufacturer's brand families;
- Verification that the manufacturer is registered to do business in this state or has a resident agent for service of process; and
- All other information and materials specifically requested by the commissioner in the course of enforcing the certification requirements of the bill.

A manufacturer required to submit a certification form must notify the commissioner of any material change to the certification form within 30 days of the change. A material change includes, but is not limited to, any order or action by the FDA or any court which affects the ability of the

manufacturer's cigarettes to be distributed for commercial distribution or sale in the United States. A manufacturer that falsely represents any information required by a certification form is guilty of a misdemeanor for each false representation.

Beginning October 1, 2025, the commissioner will maintain and make publicly available on the Department of Revenue ("department") website a state cigarette directory listing all cigarette manufacturers that have provided current and accurate certification forms and all brand families that are listed in each manufacturer's certification. The commissioner will update the directory at least monthly to ensure accuracy and will establish a process to provide retailers, distributors, wholesalers, and importers notice of the initial publication of the directory and, subsequently, changes made to the directory in the prior month.

Neither a manufacturer nor its brand family may be included or retained in the directory if the commissioner determines that the manufacturer failed to provide a complete, accurate, and otherwise compliant certification, along with payment of the required fee, or that the manufacturer sold in Mississippi any cigarette required to be certified when either the manufacturer or the cigarette was not certified and listed in the directory.

The commissioner may not remove a manufacturer or its brand family from the directory before the manufacturer has received notice of the intended removal from the commissioner setting forth the reasons for the action. Upon receipt of the required notice, the manufacturer, no later than 15 business days from the date of service of the notice, must cure the deficiencies or otherwise establish that the manufacturer or its brand family should be included in the directory.

Beginning October 1, 2025, or on the date the commissioner first makes the directory available on the department's website,

whichever is later, cigarettes not included in the directory may not be sold for retail sale in Mississippi, either directly or through an importer, distributor, wholesaler, retailer, or similar intermediary.

A retailer, importer, distributor, or wholesaler has 60 days from the date the commissioner first makes the directory available on the department's website to remove from inventory those cigarettes intended for sale in the state but not included in the directory or, in the case of a retailer, to sell those cigarettes. Upon the expiration of the initial 60 days after the first date the directory is available on the department's website, a retailer, importer, distributor, or wholesaler has 30 days following the date of removal of a manufacturer or its brand family from the directory to remove from inventory those cigarettes intended for sale in the state or, in the case of a retailer, to sell those cigarettes in the retailer's inventory on the date of removal from the directory.

Cigarettes that must be sold or removed from inventory because the cigarettes are not included in, or are removed from, the directory may not be purchased or sold for retail sale in Mississippi, either directly or through an importer, distributor, wholesaler, retailer, or similar intermediary, and are subject to seizure, forfeiture, and destruction. In addition, for each style of cigarette in a brand family offered for sale in violation of the bill until the offending product is removed from the market or properly listed on the directory, a retailer, importer, distributor, or wholesaler must pay a civil penalty of not more than \$500 per day for a first violation in a 12-month period, not less than \$750 nor more than \$1,000 per day for a second violation in a 12-month period, and not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$1,500 per day for a third violation in a 12-month period. A manufacturer whose cigarettes are not listed

in the directory and who causes the unlisted products to be sold for retail sale in Mississippi, whether directly or through an intermediary, is subject to a civil penalty of \$10,000 per day for each style of cigarette in a brand family offered for sale in violation of the bill until the offending product is removed from the market or properly listed in the directory.

Before January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the commissioner will provide a report to the Legislature on the status of the directory, manufacturers and cigarettes included in the directory, revenue and expenditures related to administration of the provisions of the bill, and enforcement activities undertaken pursuant to the bill.

ENDS products

The term "ENDS product":

- Means any noncombustible product that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit, or other electronic, chemical, or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce vapor from nicotine in a solution;
- Includes a consumable nicotine liquid solution suitable for use in an ENDS product, whether sold with the product or separately; and
- Does not include any product regulated as a drug or device under Chapter V of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USC Section 351 et seq.).

Before September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, every manufacturer of an ENDS product that is sold for retail sale or for sale to a consumer in Mississippi, whether directly or through an importer, wholesaler, distributor, retailer, or similar intermediary, must execute and deliver to the commissioner a certification that the manufacturer is compliant

with the provisions of the bill and that, for each ENDS product sold in Mississippi:

- The manufacturer has received a marketing granted order for the ENDS product from the FDA pursuant to 21 USC Section 387j;
- The manufacturer submitted a timely filed premarket tobacco product application for the ENDS product to the FDA pursuant to 21 USC Section 387j, and the application either remains under review by the FDA or has received a denial order that has been and remains stayed by the FDA or court order, rescinded by the FDA, or vacated by a court; or
- The manufacturer is not required to submit an additional marketing granted order or premarket tobacco product application for the ENDS product, because the ENDS product merely reflects changes to the name, brand style, or packaging of an ENDS product that is covered under one of the above provisions.

The certification must separately list each brand name, category (e.g., e-liquid, power unit, device, e-liquid cartridge, e-liquid pod, disposable), product name, and flavor for each ENDS product sold in Mississippi, and must be accompanied by a payment of \$500 for each ENDS product each time a manufacturer submits an annual certification form for that ENDS product, but not to exceed \$15,000 annually per manufacturer, along with a copy of:

- The marketing granted order issued by the FDA pursuant to 21 USC Section 387j;
- A copy of the acceptance letter issued by the FDA pursuant to 21 USC Section 387j for a timely filed premarket tobacco product application; or
- A document issued by the FDA or by a court confirming that the premarket tobacco product application has received a

denial order that has been and remains stayed by the FDA or court order, rescinded by the FDA, or vacated by a court.

A manufacturer required to submit a certification must notify the commissioner within 30 calendar days of any material change to the certification. A manufacturer of an ENDS product sold for retail sale in Mississippi must submit documentation to the commissioner substantiating compliance with any new federal requirements or standards within 30 days of the date compliance with such requirement or standard is mandated. Failure to do so will be grounds for removal of the manufacturer and its ENDS products from the directory.

Beginning October 1, 2025, the commissioner will maintain and make publicly available on the department's website a directory listing all ENDS product manufacturers, brand names, categories, product names, and flavors for which certification forms have been submitted and approved. The commissioner will update the directory at least monthly and establish a process to provide manufacturers, licensed retailers, distributors, and wholesalers notice of the initial publication of the directory and changes made in the prior month.

Neither a manufacturer nor its ENDS products will be included or retained in the directory if the commissioner determines that the manufacturer failed to provide a complete, accurate, and otherwise compliant certification, along with payment of the required fee, or that the manufacturer sold in Mississippi any ENDS product required to be certified when either the manufacturer or the ENDS product was not certified and listed in the directory.

The commissioner may not remove a manufacturer or its ENDS products from the directory until at least 30 business days after the manufacturer has been given notice of an intended action setting forth the reasons therefor. The ENDS product

manufacturer will have 15 business days from the date of service of the notice of the commissioner's intended action to cure the deficiencies or otherwise establish that the manufacturer or its ENDS products should be included in the directory.

Retailers will have 30 days following the removal of a manufacturer or its ENDS products from the directory to sell ENDS products that were in the retailer's inventory as of the date of removal.

After 30 calendar days following removal from the directory, the ENDS product of a manufacturer identified in the notice of removal and intended for retail sale or for sale to a consumer in Mississippi is subject to seizure, forfeiture, and destruction by the department, the Mississippi Attorney General's office, or any law enforcement agency in the state, and may not be purchased or sold for retail sale or for sale to a consumer in Mississippi.

Beginning October 1, 2025, or on the date the commissioner first makes the directory available on the department's website, whichever is later, ENDS products not included in the directory, cannot be sold for retail sale in Mississippi, either directly or through an intermediary.

A retailer, distributor, or wholesaler will have 60 days from the date the commissioner first makes the directory available on the department's website to remove from inventory those ENDS products intended for sale in the state but not included in the directory or, in the case of a retailer, to sell those ENDS products. After 60 calendar days following publication of the directory, ENDS products not listed in the directory and intended for retail sale or for sale to a consumer in Mississippi are subject to seizure, forfeiture, and destruction by the department, the Mississippi Attorney General's office, or any law enforcement agency in the state,

and may not be purchased or sold for retail sale or for sale to a consumer in Mississippi.

In addition, for each individual ENDS product offered for sale in violation of the provisions of the bill until the offending ENDS product is removed from the market or until the offending ENDS product is properly listed in the directory, a manufacturer, retailer, distributor, wholesaler, or importer will be subject to a criminal penalty, imposed by the Mississippi Attorney General's office or a district attorney, of not more than \$500 per ENDS product per day for a first violation in a 12-month period, not less than \$750 nor more than \$1,000 per ENDS product per day for a second violation in a 12-month period, and not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$1,500 per ENDS product per day for a third violation in a 12-month period. For any subsequent violation, the Attorney General or district attorney may bring an action in the appropriate state court to prevent the manufacturer, retailer, distributor, wholesaler, or importer from selling or offering to sell an ENDS product not included in the directory. If the ENDS product contains any controlled substance, including, but not limited to, fentanyl, that causes the recipient to require emergency medical care as a result of using the ENDS product, then the applicable penalty will be trebled, and any other penalty provided by law for the sale, possession, or furnishing of a controlled substance will be added.

A manufacturer whose ENDS products are not listed in the directory and who causes the ENDS products that are not listed to be sold for retail sale in Mississippi, whether directly or through an importer, distributor, wholesaler, retailer, or similar intermediary or intermediaries, is subject to a civil penalty of \$2,500 per day for each individual ENDS product offered for sale in violation of the provisions of the bill

until the offending ENDS product is removed from the market or until the offending ENDS product is properly listed in the directory. In addition, any manufacturer that falsely represents any information required by a certification form will be guilty of a misdemeanor for each false representation. A repeated violation of the provisions of the bill will also constitute a deceptive trade practice under Section 75-24-5.

Before January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the commissioner will provide a report to the Legislature on the status of the directory, manufacturers and ENDS products included in the directory, revenue and expenditures related to administration of the provisions of the bill, and enforcement activities undertaken pursuant to the bill.

HB 920. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 920 authorizes the issuance of special car tags.

Section 1 amends Section 27-19-56.549 to authorize special tags for supporters of:

- The Declaration of Independence Center for the Study of American Freedom at the University of Mississippi;
- The Mississippi Land Bank;
- The Louisiana Mississippi West Tennessee District of Kiwanis International;
- The National Guard Association of Mississippi;
- The Mississippi College School of Law; and
- The Magnolia Honeybee Education Exchange.

As is customary, \$24 of the \$30 special tag fee goes to the beneficiary organization, \$1 to the MS Burn Care Fund, \$2 to the State Highway Fund, and \$1 to the DOR for administrative costs, with the remaining \$2 retained by the tax collector.

Section 2 authorizes tags for retired members of the Commercial Transportation Enforcement Division of DPS. The \$24 goes to the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Death Benefits Trust Fund.

Section 3 authorizes tags for supporters of Promoting Peace, accomplished through the cooperation between Promote Peace Foundation and Mississippi Rotary clubs. The \$24 goes to Promote Peace Foundation to be used to support peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives within the State of Mississippi, in cooperation with the Mississippi Rotary organizations outreaching to their communities with projects related to promoting peace implemented by Mississippi Rotary clubs.

Section 4 authorizes tags for the Jackson State Tigers 2024 HBCU National Champions, with the \$24 going to the Jackson State University Development Foundation.

Section 5 amends Section 27-19-44 to apply a 100-tag presale requirement on the tags authorized for the Mississippi Land Bank.

Section 6 amends Section 27-19-56.7 to reauthorize the tags for a community or junior college.

Section 7 amends Section 27-19-56.246 to reauthorize the tags for Pascagoula High School.

Section 8 amends Section 27-19-56.431 to reauthorize the tags for the Mississippi Sickle Cell Foundation.

HB 961. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 961 reenacts Sections 27-7-22.7 and 27-7-22.9, and amends the former, to codify and extend the repealer on the law providing an income tax credit for taxpayers using the port facilities at state, county, and municipal ports for the export of cargo and requiring the Mississippi Development Authority

(MDA) to report annually to the Legislature regarding the impact of the credit. The repealer is extended to July 1, 2028.

The bill also reenacts Section 27-7-22.25 and 27-7-22.26, and amends the former, to codify and extend the repealer on the law providing an income tax credit for taxpayers using the facilities at public airports for the export or import of cargo and requiring the MDA to report annually to the Legislature regarding the impact of the credit. The repealer is extended to July 1, 2028.

HB 964. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 964 reenacts Sections 57-10-401 through 57-10-447, which provide for the issuance of bonds by the Mississippi Business Finance Corporation to finance economic development projects in order to induce the location or expansion of certain businesses within the state, and provide for a credit against state income taxes for debt service paid by companies under financing agreements entered into with the Mississippi Business Finance Corporation under the above provision. Section 57-10-449 is amended to extend the repealer on these sections to October 1, 2028.

HB 970. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 970 amends Section 27-65-111 to extend to July 1, 2028, the repeal date on the sales tax exemption for sales of tangible personal property and services to the Mississippi's Toughest Kids Foundation for use in the construction, furnishing, and equipping of buildings and related facilities and infrastructure at Camp Kamassa in Copiah County.

HB 972. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/20/25.

HB 972 amends Section 27-7-22.40 to extend to January 1, 2029, the repeal date on the income tax job credit for

enterprises primarily engaged in providing inland water transportation of cargo on lakes, rivers, and intracoastal waterways for each full-time employee employed by the enterprise in a Mississippi full-time job.

HB 1095. See summary under Ports and Marine Resources heading.

HB 1196. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1196 amends Section 41-3-16 to authorize the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District to participate in the Local Governments and Rural Water Systems Improvements Revolving Loan and Grant Program administered by the State Department of Health.

HB 1201. Section 1 effective 1/1/25, remaining sections effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1201 provides for tax incentives and incentive payments for developing eligible and blighted property, such as buildings and other facilities, and to place the developed property into use. The following terms are defined for purposes of both the tax incentive program and the incentive payment program:

- "Blighted" means a property located in Mississippi that is declared by the governing authorities of the municipality or county in which the property is located to be unsafe, due to the physical condition of the property, to an extent that the property is an economic burden on the community that cannot be expected to be reversed absent redevelopment. Blighted property includes, but is not limited to, buildings in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work, conditions that prevent or substantially hinder the viable use or capacity of buildings or lots, and depreciated or stagnant property value.

- "Eligible property" means property located in Mississippi that is tax-forfeited property certified to the state, has been declared blighted, and will be offered or used for residential or business purposes.

- "Developer" means a person, firm, corporation, authority, partnership, or other entity that constructs, repairs, renovates, and/or procures the construction, repair, or renovation of property such as buildings and other facilities, but was not the owner of the property when it was sold for taxes.

Section 1 requires the Secretary of State (SOS), in conjunction with the Department of Revenue (DOR), to establish a program to provide income tax incentives for the development of blighted property either as an owner-occupied dwelling or a commercial building. A developer desiring to participate in the incentive program must submit an application to the SOS. The application must contain a development plan providing a description of:

- The property to be developed that meets the requirements of the program;
- Evidence that the property has been declared blighted;
- The type of work the developer will perform as part of development of the property, and the purpose(s) for which the property will be placed into use after development;
- The budget to perform the development; and
- Any other information requested by the SOS.

A taxpayer incurring costs and expenses for the rehabilitation of eligible property is entitled to a rebate or credit against income taxes in an amount equal to 25% of the total costs and expenses of rehabilitation incurred after January 1, 2026, subject to the following conditions being met:

- The costs and expenses associated with rehabilitation exceed \$50,000 for an owner-occupied dwelling or \$100,000 for a commercial structure;

- The actual expenses incurred in rehabilitating the building site are between 80% and 125% of the initial estimated expenses approved by the SOS;

- The project costs were certified by a licensed third party;

- The project was completed within 36 months of the application submission; and

- The property was purchased by an owner-occupant who is not the developer, in the case of a single-family dwelling, or sold or leased to a commercial tenant that is not the developer, in the case of a commercial building.

If the amount of the tax credit exceeds the total state income tax liability for the credit year, the excess amount may be carried forward for the 10 succeeding tax years. In lieu of claiming a credit, the taxpayer may elect to claim a rebate in the amount of 75% of the amount the taxpayer would be eligible to claim as a credit.

The maximum aggregate amount of rebates and credits awarded cannot exceed \$2,000,000 in any one calendar year, and the aggregate amount of rebates or credits that may be awarded under the program cannot exceed \$10,000,000.

The rebate or credit received by a taxpayer is subject to recapture if the property is not sold or otherwise put back into productive use with an owner/occupier who is not the developer, in the case of a single-family dwelling, or sold or leased to a commercial tenant that is not the developer, in the case of a commercial building, or if the property is declared blighted by

an appropriate governing authority within three years of certification of completion.

Section 2 of the bill requires the SOS, in conjunction with the DOR, to establish a program to provide incentive payments for the development of blighted property which will increase the value of the property and promote economic development and the public interest. A developer desiring to participate in the incentive program must submit an application to the SOS. The application must contain a development plan providing:

- A description of:
 - ▶ The property to be developed;
 - ▶ The purpose(s) for which the property is being used at the time the application is submitted;
 - ▶ Evidence that the property has been declared blighted;
 - ▶ The type of work the developer will perform as part of development of the property, the purpose(s) for which the property will be placed into use after development, and whether the development of the property will be complete before being placed into use, or developed in phases and placed in use in phases before development is complete;
 - ▶ The budget to perform the development; and
- Any other information requested by the SOS.

The SOS will review an application and determine whether the developer is eligible to participate in the program. If the SOS approves the developer, the SOS will issue a certificate of participation to the developer for the development plan and provide a copy of the certificate and development plan to the municipal clerk or county chancery clerk, as applicable.

After receipt of a certificate of participation and development plan, the tax assessor of the county in which the

eligible property is located will certify the assessed value of the property to be developed under the development plan according to its most recently determined assessed value. For purposes of the program, the assessed value is the original assessed value of the property. Each year thereafter, the tax assessor will certify the assessed value of the property described in the development plan, and this assessed value will be known as the current assessed value of the property.

Beginning with the first year that property in a development plan is developed and placed into use for which it is developed, whether completely or in phases, and subject to ad valorem taxation based on such use, any amount by which the current assessed value of the property exceeds the original assessed value of the property will be known as the enhanced assessed value of the property.

For property in a development plan for which development is complete when the property is first placed into use after development, the tax assessor will certify annually the amount of the enhanced assessed value of the property to the municipality and county for the first year that the property is placed into use and subject to ad valorem tax based on that use, and for each of the next four years. For each of these years, the clerk will remit annually to the SOS an amount equal to the revenue derived from the ad valorem tax levied for general fund purposes by the municipality or county on the enhanced assessed value of the property.

For property in a development plan that is developed in phases and placed into use in phases:

- The tax assessor will certify annually the amount of the enhanced assessed value of the property to the municipality and county for the first year of those years that the property is

placed into use and subject to ad valorem tax based on that use, and for each of the succeeding years that the property is developed and placed into use in phases until the development is complete and the property is placed into use for which it was developed, and the clerk will:

- ▶ For the first of such years, remit to the SOS an amount equal to the revenue derived from the ad valorem tax levied for general fund purposes by the municipality or county on the enhanced assessed value of the property for such year; and

- ▶ For each of the succeeding years after the first year through the first year after the development of the property is complete and the property is subject to ad valorem tax based on the use for which it was developed, remit to the SOS an amount equal to the revenue derived from the ad valorem tax levied for general fund purposes by the municipality or county on the amount of any increase of the enhanced assessed value of the property for the applicable year from the enhanced assessed value of the property for the immediately preceding year.

- After the property has completed development according to a development plan and has been placed into use for which it was developed, the tax assessor will certify annually the amount of the enhanced assessed value of the property to the municipality and county for the first year that the property is placed into use and subject to ad valorem tax based on that use, and for each of the next four years. For each of those years, the clerk will remit annually to the SOS an amount equal to the revenue derived from the ad valorem tax levied by the municipality or county for general fund purposes on the enhanced assessed value of the property.

The SOS will deposit the funds received from the clerk into a special fund created in the bill and will allocate and use monies in the special fund for the purpose of making incentive payments as follows:

- For property that has completed development according to a plan and purchased by an owner/occupier that is not the developer, in the case of a single-family dwelling, or is sold or leased to a commercial tenant that is not the developer, in the case of a commercial building, the SOS will disburse to the developer an incentive payment for an amount equal to the amount remitted to the SOS by the clerk in each year that the remittances are made, not to exceed an aggregate of 25% of the approved budget for the project.

- For property that is developed according to a plan in phases and placed into use in phases:

- ▶ The SOS will disburse to the developer for each applicable year an amount equal to the amount remitted to the SOS by the clerk; and

- ▶ After the property has completed development according to the plan and has been placed into use, the SOS will disburse an amount equal to the amount remitted to the SOS by the clerk in each year that the remittances are made, not to exceed an aggregate of 25% of the approved budget for the project.

HB 1284. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/2/25.

HB 1284 renames the "Mississippi Native Spirit Law" as the "Mississippi Native And Craft Spirits Law." The bill brings craft distilleries and craft spirits within the scope of this law, thereby legalizing the manufacture and sale of craft spirits, to be regulated in the same manner as native wine and native spirits. "Craft spirit" is defined as any alcoholic

beverage produced in whole or in part in Mississippi by a distillery created under the laws of Mississippi at a location within Mississippi. "Craft distillery" is defined as any place or establishment within this state where a craft spirit is produced in whole or in part.

The bill also authorizes any native distillery or craft distillery to have tasting room sales locations within five miles of the distillery, as well as one permanent satellite tasting room sales location in any other location in the state that otherwise allows the sale of alcoholic beverages. Manufacturers of distilled spirits, including native spirits and craft spirits, are allowed to obtain festival permits, previously limited to wine manufacturers. Craft spirit retailer's permits are authorized for issuance to the holder of a Class 5 manufacturer's permit, which is subject to an annual privilege license tax of \$300 per 1,000 gallons of craft spirit produced, but not to exceed \$3,000. Permit holders may sell alcoholic beverages produced by other suppliers. Hours of sale shall be the same as those authorized for on-premises permittees in the city or county in which the craft spirit retailer is located.

An exemption from the distance restrictions regarding the sale or storage of alcoholic beverages is added for any location in Rosedale that is both a historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places and also a qualified resort area.

The bill also adds holders of distillery retailer's permits, native spirit retailer's permits, and craft spirit retailer's permits to those permittees whose patrons are allowed to remove open glasses, cups, or other containers of alcoholic beverages from licensed premises in a leisure and recreation district for consumption within the boundaries of the district.

HB 1341. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 1341 reenacts Sections 57-117-1 through 57-117-9, the Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act, and amends Section 57-117-11 to extend to July 1, 2026, the date of the repealer on the act. It also:

- Amends Section 27-31-101 to extend the date of the reverter on the provisions of law authorizing county boards of supervisors and municipal governing authorities to grant an ad valorem tax exemption to health care industry facilities as defined in the Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act;
- Amends Section 27-31-104 to extend the date of the reverter on the provisions of law authorizing county boards of supervisors and municipal governing authorities to grant a fee-in-lieu of ad valorem taxes to qualified businesses as defined in the Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act which meet minimum criteria established by the Mississippi Development Authority; and
- Amends Section 27-65-101 to extend the date of the repealer on the provision of law exempting from sales taxation sales of materials used in the construction of, or addition or improvements to, a health care industry facility as defined in the Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act and certain sales of machinery and equipment to be used in the facility.

HB 1461. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1461 amends Section 57-1-301 to revise the definition of "capital improvements" for purposes of the Local Governments Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program to include any project determined to be a capital improvement by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). It also amends Section 57-1-303 to extend to July 1, 2029, the repealer on the provision of law authorizing the MDA to use certain monies in

the Local Governments Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Fund for the MDA's ordinary and necessary general support.

HB 1644. Section 3 effective 7/1/25, remaining sections effective 1/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1644 amends Section 57-87-5 to revise the definition of "equipment used in the deployment of broadband technologies" for purposes of the income tax credit and corporation franchise tax credit available to telecommunications enterprises for investments made in such equipment before July 1, 2030 (July 1, 2025, under the prior law), and for purposes of the ad valorem tax exemption for such equipment placed in service.

The bill provides that, for calendar year 2025, and for each calendar year thereafter, the aggregate amount of income tax and corporation franchise tax credits that may be claimed during a calendar year cannot exceed \$15,000,000, and for credits claimed during a calendar year, no more than \$1,500,000 may be claimed by a single telecommunications enterprise. For calendar year 2025, and for each calendar year thereafter, a telecommunications enterprise may file the cost of equipment used in the deployment of broadband technologies with the Department of Revenue between March 1 and March 20 for the expenditures incurred in the preceding calendar year. If the total credits requested exceed the annual aggregate cap of \$15,000,000, each telecommunications enterprise will be allocated credits on a prorated basis. No credit will be allowed if the equipment was paid for, or its cost was reimbursed by, funds made available under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

Section 57-87-7 is amended to provide that equipment used in the deployment of fixed broadband technologies by a telecommunications enterprise that is placed in service after

June 30, 2025, and before July 1, 2030, and capable of transmission at average speeds per customer at least equal to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) fixed broadband speed benchmarks in both directions, will be exempt from ad valorem taxation for a period of 10 years after the date the equipment is placed in service, or for such period the equipment remains capable of speeds at least equal to the FCC's then-current fixed broadband speed benchmarks in both directions, whichever period is less.

Equipment used in the deployment of mobile broadband technologies by a telecommunications enterprise that is placed in service after June 30, 2025, and before July 1, 2030, and capable of transmission at average speeds not less than 35 megabits per second downlink and three megabits per second uplink, will be exempt from ad valorem taxation for a period of five years after the date the equipment is placed in service.

A taxpayer seeking an ad valorem tax exemption for equipment must submit a certified, sworn description of the equipment, including transmission speeds, to the tax assessor of the county in which the equipment is located, on or before April 1 of the first assessment year in which the exemption is being claimed.

Section 27-65-101 is amended to revise the definition of "equipment used in the deployment of broadband technologies" for purposes of the industrial sales tax exemptions for sales of such equipment. Sales of the equipment must be made before July 1, 2030 (July 1, 2025, under the prior law), in order for the sales tax exemptions to apply.

HB 1878. Effective 1/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1878 amends Section 27-35-50 to provide for the manner of determining the true value of rural structures for ad valorem

tax assessment purposes. The bill defines "rural structure" to mean any rural secondary building covered in Chapter V of the Department of Revenue appraisal manual, as revised December 2020. The term "rural structure" includes, but is not limited to, silos, grain storage bins, barns, and poultry houses, but does not include rural dwellings.

The true value of any rural structure appraised before January 1, 2025, will be recalculated for 2025 and subsequent tax years as follows, beginning with a reappraisal of the true value as of the year of the initial appraisal:

- In arriving at the true value of a rural structure in operation on or before January 1, 2025, the assessor will follow the guidelines in the Department of Revenue appraisal manual in use immediately prior to the version revised December 2020. In arriving at the true value of a rural structure placed in operation after January 1, 2025, the assessor will follow the guidelines in the most current version of the Department of Revenue appraisal manual.

- After the initial appraisal, the true value of a rural structure will be based solely on depreciation on a straight-line basis at a rate of 7% per year. For as long as a poultry house remains usable and in production, net depreciation will not fall below 20% of the original true value. Once the 20% threshold is reached, no further depreciation will be applied for the duration of the operational life of the poultry house.

- Starting with land roll 2009, an adjustment of 45% for economic obsolescence will be applied to all poultry houses used in commercial farming operations.

HB 1896. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1896 imposes an excise tax on each person or dealer in kratom products upon sale, use, consumption, handling, or distribution in the State of Mississippi, at the rate of 25% of the manufacturer's list price. The bill defines the following terms for purposes of the tax:

- "Kratom leaf" means the leaf of the kratom plant (*Mitragyna speciosa*) in fresh or dehydrated (dried) form and subjected to no post-harvest processing other than:
 - ▶ Drying or size reduction (e.g., by cutting, milling, or similar procedure); and
 - ▶ Cleaning or sterilization through the application of heat, steam, pressurization, irradiation, or other standard treatments applied to food ingredients.
- "Kratom leaf extract" means the material extracted from kratom leaves via application of a solvent consisting of water, ethanol, or food grade carbon dioxide, or any other solvent allowed by federal or state regulation to be used in the manufacturing of a food ingredient.
- "Kratom product" means a food or dietary supplement that consists of or contains kratom leaf or kratom leaf extract.

The bill also amends Section 27-69-15 to revise provisions relating to the remittance of the tobacco excise tax on products purchased outside this state upon which the Mississippi tax has not been imposed as follows:

- Any person engaged in this state in the business of making wholesale or retail sales of other tobacco products, including cigars, smoking tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other tobacco products except cigarettes and heated tobacco products, who purchases such products from a wholesaler or manufacturer outside this state upon which the Mississippi

tobacco excise tax has not been imposed, will be responsible for remitting the excise tax directly to the Department of Revenue (DOR) by the twentieth of the month following the month the sale occurred of the other tobacco products by such person to a Mississippi customer.

- Any person making retail purchases of other tobacco products, including cigars, smoking tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other tobacco products except cigarettes and heated tobacco products, for personal use in this state who purchased such other tobacco products from outside this state upon which the Mississippi tobacco excise tax has not been imposed, will be responsible for remitting the excise tax directly to the DOR within 48 hours after the purchase of the other tobacco products.

HB 1897. Effective on passage. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1897 creates a new article in Chapter 64, Title 57, Mississippi Code of 1972, authorizing the Boards of Supervisors of Tate, Panola, Lafayette, and Yalobusha Counties to form the Northwest Regional Alliance (NWRRA) for the purpose of engaging in economic development projects in those counties. Each of the above county boards is authorized to adopt any and all lawful resolutions, orders, or ordinances, to execute such documents, contracts, leases, certificates, and indentures, and to do and perform any and all acts and things not otherwise prohibited by law which are necessary, useful, or convenient to aid and cooperate with the mission of the NWRRA. The county boards may also appropriate funds to the NWRRA from any available funds to assist the NWRRA in carrying out the provisions of the article.

The above county boards may levy a special ad valorem tax annually in an amount not to exceed two mills on all taxable property within their respective counties to carry out the

provisions of the article. Such a tax will be in addition to all other tax levies provided by law and may be levied only for specific purposes and must cease to be levied when the debt is eliminated for the specific purpose for which it was levied. The additional millage under this tax must be excluded from the 10% increase limitation under Section 27-39-321 and any other limitation on the increase of ad valorem taxes.

The above county boards may also issue general obligation bonds of their respective counties for the purposes of the article. Each county is authorized to issue its general obligation bonds in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$5,000,000 to finance a portion of the costs of a project. Any bonds issued under the article will not constitute an indebtedness within the meaning of any constitutional or statutory limitation or restriction as to the amount of debt which may be incurred by the county.

HB 1901. Effective 1/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1901 amends Section 57-105-1 to increase, from \$15,000,000 to \$16,000,000, the amount of tax credits the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) may allocate during a state fiscal year under the program authorizing it to allocate income tax credits and insurance premium tax credits for taxpayers holding certain qualified equity investments. In addition, the MDA's authority to allocate credits under the program is extended to July 1, 2029.

FORESTRY

SB 2019. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/13/25.

SB 2019 amends the Forestry Facility Grant Program, to expand which projects may be considered for a grant. The expanded eligibility now allows project sites that use at least 25 acres of land under public control or existing wood-use facilities to be considered. Additionally, SB 2019 amends the grant funding to amounts based on funds provided by the State Legislature.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

SB 2267. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2267 creates the Mississippi Statewide Data Exchange Act, which requires the Department of Information Technology Services to conduct a comprehensive study on the implementation of a statewide data exchange initiative. The department will coordinate with state agencies to assess data-sharing needs, operational requirements and policy considerations. The department shall also develop the data exchange and then phase in implementation to ensure a secure, cloud-based statewide data exchange platform that allows for interagency data sharing, while also complying with privacy and security standards.

To oversee, coordinate and provide strategic guidance for the data exchange initiative, SB 2267 requires MDITS to establish the Chief Information Officer Council that shall be composed of information and technology leaders from state agencies. The council will provide recommendations for interoperability frameworks and cybersecurity, facilitate interagency collaboration to improve data-sharing efficiencies and serve as an advisory board to MDITS in evaluating the long-term sustainability and innovation potential of the platform.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

SB 2260. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2260 establishes the Blue Envelope Program to enhance effective communication between law enforcement and drivers with autism, and directs the Department of Public Safety to administer the program and to provide for, assist in, and authorize the printing and assembling of a program package. In addition, the bill identifies who may request a program package and instructs the Department of Public Safety to provide information on its website regarding how to obtain a program package. The bill also provides how a driver may participate in the program.

HB 150. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 150 amends Section 93-5-27, to adjust weight limits for vehicles transporting concrete and solid waste. The bill increases the maximum allowable gross vehicle weight to 64,000 pounds for three-axle configurations and establishes a limit of 72,000 pounds for four-axle configurations. It also specifies maximum weight limits for axle distributions:

- 22,000 pounds for single axles;
- 48,000 pounds for two-axle tandems; and
- 57,000 pounds for three-axle tandems.

These vehicles are restricted to operating within a 50-mile radius of their home base and must not exceed their rated capacity. Additionally, all such vehicles must have at least three axles, with three-axle vehicles required to have all wheels equipped with brakes. The bill prohibits these vehicles from traveling on federal interstate highways or on roads and bridges designated as incapable of carrying such loads by relevant authorities.

HB 638. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 638 amends Section 65-1-8, to authorize the Mississippi Transportation Commission to delegate its authority to enter into supplemental agreements for certain contracts previously approved by the commission, provided that such expenditures do not exceed \$250,000, increasing the spending authority on the previously capped \$100,000 limit.

HB 953. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 953 amends Section 63-5-33, to extend the repealer of the provisions concerning the maximum allowable weight for vehicles operating under harvest permits and the requirement for certain harvest permit holders to obtain prior approval for their designated routes for three years, to now stand repealed on July 1, 2028.

HB 1245. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 1245 designates various segments of highways and bridges across the state as memorials to honor distinguished individuals and groups. The designations are as follows:

- "Medal of Honor Trail": Designates the entire segment of Interstate 22 traversing through DeSoto, Marshall, Benton, Union, Pontotoc, Lee and Itawamba Counties, Mississippi, along with a portion of U.S. Highway 78 in Byhalia, DeSoto County, extending to the Mississippi-Tennessee state line, as the "Medal of Honor Trail."

- "MSgt. Bridgette R. Horn Memorial Highway": Designates a segment of Mississippi Highway 19 South in Neshoba County as the "MSgt. Bridgette R. Horn Memorial Highway," honoring her service and marking her "End of Watch" on November 19, 2020.

- "Meaghan Bedford Reed Memorial Highway": Designates a portion of Mississippi Highway 9 South in Pontotoc County in memory of Meaghan Bedford Reed.
- "Badger-Malone-Igleharte Memorial Bridge": Names the Strong River Bridge on Mississippi Highway 149 in Simpson County to honor Charles Badger, Kevin Malone and Charles Igleharte.
- "Houston 'Dale' Kennedy Memorial Highway": Designates a segment of Mississippi Highway 366 in Prentiss County in memory of Houston 'Dale' Kennedy.
- "Jerry Wilburn Memorial Bridge": Names the bridge on Regional Center Drive in Oxford, Lafayette County, in honor of Jerry Wilburn.
- "Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge": Names the bridge on U.S. Route 72 spanning Turner Creek in Corinth, Alcorn County, as a tribute to Vietnam veterans.
- "Timothy Jones-Willie R. Jones-George Hilton Stephenson-Adam J. Sims-Johnny Lee Jones Memorial Road": Designates a segment of County Road 14 in Jasper County in honor of these individuals.
- Berean Children's Home Signage: Mandates the placement of signage for the Berean Children's Home on U.S. Route 84 in Lincoln County, approaching the intersection with Mississippi Highway 583.
- "Elizabeth 'Lake' Little Memorial Highway": Designates a segment of Mississippi Highway 82 East in Oktibbeha County in memory of Elizabeth "Lake" Little.
- "Officer Liquori T. Tate Memorial Road": Designates a segment of Blackjack Road in Oktibbeha County in honor of Officer Liquori T. Tate, honoring his service and marking his "End of Watch" on May 9, 2015.

- "Winfred T. Aiken Memorial Highway": Designates a portion of Mississippi Highway 4 East in Tate County in memory of Winfred T. Aiken.

- "Mary Kalene 'Katie' Pipkins Memorial Highway": Designates a segment of Mississippi Highway 63 North in Leakesville, Greene County, in honor of Mary Kalene "Katie" Pipkins.

The bill also authorizes the State Highway Commission, acting on its own behalf, or on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Transportation, to donate a specific parcel of land, known as the "Marks Community Park," to the City of Marks, Mississippi. The conveyance is conditioned that no junkyards shall be established or maintained on the described lands, and no signs, billboards, outdoor advertising structures or advertisement of any kind shall be hereafter erected, displayed, placed or maintained upon or within the land. There is an exception allowed for signage that may be erected and maintained to advertise the sale, hire or lease of the property, or principal activities conducted on the land. The State of Mississippi retains all mineral rights to the property, and MDOT is authorized to correct any discrepancies in the legal description of the property. Finally, any expenses incurred in conducting a survey of the property shall be paid for by the City of Marks, Mississippi.

INSURANCE

SB 2401. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2401 creates a study committee on the matter of certification of health benefit plans and health insurance issuers that provide for the financing and delivery of health care services to enrollees.

The study committee shall be composed of the following members:

- Three members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the Senate Insurance Committee, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the Senate Public Health and Human Services Committee, and one of whom shall be a medical doctor or other physician member of the Mississippi State Medical Association;

- Three members appointed by the Speaker of the House, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the House Insurance Committee, one of whom shall be the Chairman of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee, and one of whom shall be a medical doctor or other physician member of the Mississippi Independent Physician Practice Association;

- Three members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Department of Finance and Administration or his or her designee, one of whom shall be a president or chief executive officer of a health benefit plan certified by the Department of Insurance or his or her designee, and one of whom shall be an administrator for a hospital or ambulatory surgery center located in Mississippi;

- The Commissioner of Insurance or his or her designee; and
- The Chairman of the Mississippi State Board of Health or his or her designee.

The study committee shall study and make recommendations regarding the matter of certification of health benefit plans and health insurance issuers, including, but not limited to, health benefit plans that provide for the financing and delivery of health care services to persons enrolled in such plans and the providing of health care services by participating providers pursuant to the Patient Protection Act of 1995, Section 83-41-403 et seq., or other laws and related issues, including, but not limited to, measures to address conditions under which participating provider contracts may be amended; access to fee schedules by participating providers; physician advisory committees; billing dispute processes; any willing or authorized participating providers; assignment of plan benefits; regulation of excessive surpluses of plans or their operators; charitable foundations affiliated with health insurance issuers or health benefit plans; and accurate measurement and reporting of market share of health benefit plans, health insurance issuers, and licensed insurance companies that operate health benefit plans or networks.

SB 2412. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2412 amends multiple code sections to include NAIC group capital calculation and "NAIC Liquidity Stress Test Framework" requirements in the Insurance Holding Company Act.

It amends Section 83-6-1, to define the following terms and phrases:

- "Group capital calculation instructions" means the group capital calculation instructions as adopted by the NAIC and as amended by the NAIC from time to time in accordance with the procedures adopted by the NAIC.
- "NAIC" means the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

- "NAIC Liquidity Stress Test Framework" is a separate NAIC publication which includes a history of the NAIC's development of regulatory liquidity stress testing, the Scope Criteria applicable for a specific data year, and the Liquidity Stress Test Framework instructions and reporting templates for a specific data year, such Scope Criteria, instructions and reporting template being as adopted by the NAIC and as amended by the NAIC from time to time in accordance with the procedures adopted by the NAIC.

- "Scope Criteria" as detailed in the "NAIC Liquidity Stress Test Framework," are the designated exposure bases, along with minimum magnitudes thereof for the specified data year, used to establish a preliminary list of insurers considered scoped into the NAIC Liquidity Stress Test Framework for that data year.

SB 2412 amends Section 83-6-5, to provide that:

- The ultimate controlling person of every insurer subject to registration shall concurrently file with the registration an annual group capital calculation as directed by the Commissioner of Insurance. The report shall be completed in accordance with the NAIC group capital calculation instructions, which may permit the Commissioner of Insurance to allow a controlling person that is not the ultimate controlling person to file the group capital calculation. The report shall be filed with the insurance holding company system as determined by the commissioner in accordance with the procedures within the Financial Analysis Handbook adopted by the NAIC. Certain insurance holding company systems are exempt from filing the group capital calculation.

- The ultimate controlling person of every insurer subject to registration and also scoped into the NAIC Liquidity Stress

Test Framework shall also file the results of a specific year's liquidity stress test. The filing shall be made to the Commissioner of Insurance of the insurance holding company system as determined by the procedures within the Financial Analysis Handbook adopted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

- Failure to file a registration statement or any summary of the registration state or enterprise risk filing required by this act within the time specified for filing shall be a violation of this section.

SB 2412 amends Section 83-6-7, to clarify that the definition of materiality used in Section 83-6-7 shall not apply for purposes of the group capital calculation or Liquidity Stress Test Framework.

The bill amends Section 83-6-21, to provide that if an insurer subject to this act is deemed by the commissioner to be in a hazardous financial condition as defined by 19 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 1, Chapter 39 or a condition that would be grounds for supervision, conservation, or delinquency proceeding, then the commissioner may require the insurer to secure and maintain either a deposit, held by the commissioner, or a bond, as determined by the insurer at the insurer's discretion, for the protection of the insurer for the duration of the contract(s) or agreement(s), or the existence of the condition for which the commissioner required the deposit or the bond. In determining whether a deposit or a bond is required, the commissioner should consider whether concerns exist with respect to the affiliated person's ability to fulfill the contract(s) or agreement(s) if the insurer were to be put into liquidation.

It also amends Section 83-6-21 to clarify that premiums or other funds belonging to the insurer that are collected by or

held by an affiliate are the exclusive property of the insurer and are subject to the control of the insurer. Any right of offset in the event an insurer is placed into receivership shall be subject to the Insurers Rehabilitation and Liquidation Act, Sections 83-24-1 through 83-24-119.

It provides that any affiliate that is a party to an agreement or contract with a domestic insurer that is subject to this act shall be subject to the jurisdiction of any supervision, seizure, conservatorship, or receivership proceedings against the insurer and to the authority of any supervisor, conservator, rehabilitator, or liquidator for the insurer appointed pursuant to supervision and receivership acts for the purpose of interpreting, enforcing, and overseeing the affiliate's obligations under the agreement or contract to perform services for the insurer.

The bill amends Section 83-6-29, to clarify that for purposes of the information reported and provided to the Department of Insurance pursuant to this act, the commissioner shall maintain the confidentiality of the group capital calculation and group capital ratio produced within the calculation and any group capital information received from an insurance holding company supervised by the Federal Reserve Board or any non-U.S. group-wide supervisor. It also clarifies that for purposes of the information reported and provided to the Department of Insurance pursuant to this act, the commissioner shall maintain the confidentiality of the Liquidity Stress Test results and supporting disclosures and any liquidity stress test information received from an insurance holding company supervised by the Federal Reserve Board and non-U.S. group-wide supervisors.

It provides that the group capital calculations and resulting group capital ratio required under this act and the

liquidity stress test along with its results and supporting disclosures required under this act are regulatory tools for assessing group risks and capital adequacy and group liquidity risks, respectively, and are not intended as a means to rank insurers or insurance holding company systems generally. Therefore, except as otherwise may be required under the provisions of this act, the making, publishing, disseminating, circulating, or placing before the public, or causing directly or indirectly to be made, published, disseminating, circulating, or placing before the public, or causing directly or indirectly to be made, published, disseminated, circulated, or placed before the public in a newspaper, magazine, or other publication, or in the form of a notice, circular, pamphlet, letter, or poster, or over any radio or television station or any electronic means of communication available to the public, or in any other way as an advertisement, announcement, or statement containing a representation or statement with regard to the group capital calculation, group capital ratio, the Liquidity Stress Test results, or supporting disclosures for the Liquidity Stress Test of any insurer or any insurer group, or of any component derived in the calculation by any insurer, broker, or other person engaged in any manner in the insurance business would be misleading and is therefore prohibited.

SB 2415. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2415 amends Section 83-9-351, to extend to July 1, 2028, the repealer on the provision of law requiring health insurance and employee benefit plans to provide coverage for telemedicine services to the same extent that the services would be covered if provided through in-person consultation.

SB 2894. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2894 amends Section 83-23-109, to include "cybersecurity insurance" for purposes of the Mississippi Insurance Guaranty Association statutes. "Cybersecurity insurance," for purposes of this act, includes first- and third-party coverage, in a policy or endorsement, written on a direct, admitted basis for losses and loss mitigation arising out of or relating to data privacy breaches, unauthorized information network security intrusions, computer viruses, ransomware, cyber extortion, indemnity theft, and similar exposures.

The bill provides that an insurance policy issued by a member insurer and later allocated, transferred, or assumed by, or otherwise made the sole responsibility of another insurer, pursuant to any provision of law of this state providing for the division of an insurance company or the statutory assumption or transfer of designated policies and under which there is no remaining obligation to the transferring entity, shall be considered to have been issued by a member insurer which is an insolvent insurer for the purposes of this act in the event that the insurer to which the policy has been allocated, transferred, assumed by, or otherwise made the sole responsibility of is placed in liquidation. An insurance policy that was issued by a nonmember insurer and later allocated, transferred, assumed by, or otherwise made the sole responsibility of a member insurer under any provision of law of this state shall not be considered to have been issued by a member insurer for the purposes of this act.

SB 2894 amends Section 83-23-115, to provide that following a determination of insolvency, certain obligations of the association shall be satisfied by paying the claimant an amount in excess of \$50 but not exceeding \$400,000 per claimant for property damage covered claims. The also includes that in no

event shall the association be obligated to pay an amount in excess of \$300,000 for all first- and third-party claims under a policy or endorsement providing or that is found to provide cybersecurity insurance coverages and arising out of a single insured event, regardless of the number of claims made or the number of claimants.

HB 17. Effective on passage. Law without Governor's signature 3/21/25.

HB 17, known as the "Protecting Patient Access to Physician-Administered Drugs Act," is a bill to ensure patient access to physician-administered drugs and related services under a health insurance contract by prohibiting health insurance issuers from refusing to authorize, approve, or pay a participating provider for physician-administered drugs and related services to covered persons, or requiring a covered person to pay a penalty or additional fee to obtain the physician-administered drug provided by a participating provider. Provider agreements must be construed as including a provision requiring that, when all criteria for medical necessity are met, the drug and its administration will be payable regardless of whether the provider obtains the drugs from a pharmacy that is not in the health insurance issuer's network. Provisions in a contract that are contrary to HB 17 must be considered null and void and unenforceable, and Section 75-24-5 is amended to include violations of the act in the list of unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive trade practices which are prohibited under the state consumer protection laws.

HB 959. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 959 amends Section 83-1-191, to extend the date of the repealer on the Comprehensive Hurricane Damage Mitigation Program within the Department of Insurance to July 1, 2028.

HB 999. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 999 amends Section 75-49-3, to revise the definition of the term "modular home" for purposes of The Uniform Standards Code for Factory-Built Homes Law.

HB 1174. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 1174 amends Section 83-17-501, to define certain terms related to public adjusters, including "person" and "home state."

- Section 2 of this bill amends Section 83-17-511, to provide for additional requirements for the licensure for public adjusters by the Department of Insurance, including having not committed any act that is grounds for probation, suspension, revocation, or refusal of a license, having passed the examination for the adjuster license and the applicable line of authority, paying certain fees, and being financially responsible to exercise the license.

- To demonstrate financial responsibility, an applicant for an adjuster's license shall obtain a bond or irrevocable letter of credit.

- ▶ The surety bond must be a minimum of \$50,000, must be in favor of the State of Mississippi, must specifically authorize recovery of any person in Mississippi who sustained damages as a result of the public adjuster's actions, and must not be terminated unless certain notice is given.

- ▶ The irrevocable letter of credit must be a minimum of \$50,000, must be subject to lawful levy of execution on

behalf of any person to whom the public adjuster has been found legally liable, and must not be terminated unless certain notice is given.

- The section also provides for the licensing of business entities as public adjusters and nonresident public adjusters.

- ▶ Before approving an application of a business entity as a public adjuster, the Commissioner of Insurance shall find that the business entity is eligible to designate Mississippi as its home state, has designated a licensed adjuster or public adjuster responsible for the business entity's compliance with the insurance laws and regulations of Mississippi, has not committed an act that is a ground for probation, suspension, revocation, or refusal of a public adjuster's license, and has paid the privilege tax pursuant to Section 27-15-97.

- ▶ A nonresident person applying for a nonresident public adjuster license must show that the person is currently licensed in good standing as a public adjuster in his or her home state, that the person has submitted the proper request for licensure and has paid the fees required by Section 25-17-97, that the person has submitted the uniform individual application, and that the person's designated home state issues nonresident public adjuster licenses to persons of Mississippi on the same basis.

- The bill amends Section 83-17-523, to require additional contract terms in contracts between a public adjuster and an insured.

- ▶ The revocation or cancellation of a public adjuster contract must be in writing, mailed, or delivered to the public adjuster at the address in the contract, and postmarked or received within the five-business-day period. Additionally, if an insured exercises the right to revoke or cancel a contract,

anything of value given by the insured under the contract to the public adjuster shall be returned to the insured within 15 business days following receipt by the public adjuster of the contract revocation or cancellation.

► All contracts between the public adjuster and the insured for services must be in writing and contain certain terms, including: the legible full name of the adjuster signing the contract, as specified in the department's licensing records, the adjuster's permanent home state business address and phone number, the license number issued to the adjuster by the department, a title of "Public Adjuster Contract," the insured's full name, street address, insurer name, and policy number, if known or upon notification, a description of the loss or damage and its location, a description of services to be provided to the insured, the signatures of the adjuster and the insured, the date the contract was signed by the adjuster and the insured, and attestation language stating that the adjuster has a letter of credit or a surety bond as required by Section 83-17-511.

• Lastly, the bill creates a new section of law that provides that all funds received or held by a public adjuster on behalf of an insured toward the settlement of a claim shall be handled in a fiduciary capacity and deposited into certain fiduciary trust accounts.

HB 1611. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 1611 amends Section 83-5-28 to require insurance companies to issue notices for renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal of property and casualty insurance not less than 45 days before the effective date of the renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal. The bill also provides that if the insurer fails to meet the 45-day

notice requirement, the named insured has the option of continuing the policy or contract for the remainder of the notice period plus an additional 45 days at the premium rate of the existing policy or contract. Such option shall continue in forty-five-day increments until the insurer provides the notice required in this section. Such requirement begins on July 1, 2026.

The bill amends Sections 83-11-5 and 83-11-7 to require insurance companies to issue notices for renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal of automobile insurance not less than 45 days before the effective date of the renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal. The bill also provides that if the insurer fails to meet the 45-day notice requirement, the named insured has the option of continuing the policy or contract for the remainder of the notice period plus an additional 45 days at the premium rate of the existing policy or contract. Such option shall continue in forty-five-day increments until the insurer provides the notice required in this section. Such requirement begins on July 1, 2026.

The bill amends Section 71-3-77 to require insurance companies to issue notices for renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal of workers' compensation insurance not less than 45 days before the effective date of the renewal, cancellation, reduction of coverage, or nonrenewal. The bill also provides that if the insurer fails to meet the 45-day notice requirement, the named insured has the option of continuing the policy or contract for the remainder of the notice period plus an additional 45 days at the premium rate of the existing policy or contract. Such option shall continue in forty-five-day increments until the insurer provides the notice

required in this section. Such requirement begins on July 1, 2026.

JUDICIARY, DIVISION A

SB 2328. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2328 clarifies several provisions of the Residential Landlord Tenant Act.

First, it amends Section 89-8-35, which is the summons procedure for an eviction proceeding, to provide that a tenant will have no right to reside in the premises once the tenant has been removed. It clarifies that the landlord must grant the tenant reasonable access to the premises during the 72 hours following the tenant's removal to retrieve the tenant's personal property.

Second, the bill amends Section 89-8-39 to provide that unless the tenant pays all unpaid rent in full and other sums awarded to the landlord, the tenant will have no right to reside in or on the premises after the court-ordered move out date. It also provides that the warrant of removal shall not be considered executed by law enforcement posting the warrant of removal on the door of the premises and that law enforcement must remove all occupants from the premises and place the landlord into physical possession of the premises.

Third, SB 2328 amends Sections 89-8-3 and 89-8-31 to clarify that the Residential Landlord Tenant Act also applies to the parties' rights to possession following the termination or expiration of such an agreement.

Last, the bill provides that the owner or operating agent of a recreational vehicle park may have a person removed from the park for certain reasons, such as intoxication, profanity, lewdness, or brawling, failure to pay rent or disturbance of the peace. The bill provides the process for removal when a person refuses to leave and authorizes a law enforcement officer to arrest such person. The bill also provides that a refusal of

accommodations, service or access to the premises under this section may not be based upon race, color, national origin, sex, physical disability or creed.

SB 2451. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2451 amends Section 91-17-401 of the Mississippi Principal and Income Act of 2013. Section 91-17-401 is the provision of law that provides for the character of receipts from entities during the administration of trusts. The bill amends the provision of Section 91-17-401 that governs money received in partial liquidation.

Under the bill one method that money is received in partial liquidation is if the total amount of money and property received in a distribution or series of related distributions by all of the owners, collectively, is greater than 20% of the entity's total assets, as shown by the entity's year-end financial statements immediately preceding the initial receipt. For purposes of this method, "total assets" means the amount of cash and the aggregate adjusted bases of other property held by the entity. The bill further provides that if money is received in partial liquidation in the method described above, a portion of the receipt allocated to principal shall be reallocated to income by the trustee to reimburse the trustee or beneficiary for the federal and state income taxes attributable to the receipt.

SB 2469. Effective on passage. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2469 creates a study committee (1) to study the problem of unmerchantable and uninsurable titles resulting from sales of land for nonpayment of taxes, blight created as a result of the current tax sale process, and other inconsistencies within the current sale process and (2) to recommend solutions for such

problems and inconsistencies. The committee is composed of the following 7 members:

- Two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;
- Two members of the House, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- One chancery clerk, to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;
- One tax assessor, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- The Secretary of State, or a designee, as an ex officio, nonvoting member.

The bill sets up the procedure for the study committee to conduct itself and provides that any political subdivision of the state shall, at the request of the chairman of the study committee, provide the facilities, assistance, information and data needed to enable the study committee to carry out its duties. Last, the bill provides that the study committee shall be dissolved on or before January 1, 2026.

SB 2482. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2482 amends Section 9-1-59 to provide that public defenders and county prosecutors in cases related to the Mississippi Electronic Court system shall have free access to the system for matters involving indigent defendants.

SB 2489. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2489 authorizes each Supreme Court Justice and each Judge of the Court of Appeals to receive an expense allowance while actually attending judicial duties in any area of the state for up to 12 days a month. It also provides that no

justice or judge shall receive an expense allowance for more than the 20 days previously authorized by law.

SB 2766. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2766 amends Section 93-17-3 to provide that a certificate of a child's physical and mental condition attached to an adoption petition may be executed by a physician licensed under Chapter 25 of Title 73 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.

SB 2767. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

Section 1 of SB 2767 creates the Mississippi Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Council to ensure that monies received and deposited into the Opioid Settlement Fund are allocated and spent in accordance with the terms of the opioid settlements, except as otherwise authorized in Section 27-103-305(4), and to ensure public involvement, accountability and transparency in allocating and accounting for the monies in the fund. The council is to review applications for grants funded by the proceeds of opioid settlements and to make recommendations to the Legislature for the appropriation of such proceeds to fund the grants. The Legislature may then accept or reject each of the council's grant recipient recommendations, but shall not otherwise amend or modify the recommended list of grant recipients or the amounts recommended for the recipients. The council, though, shall not exclude any qualified applicant from the list provided to the Legislature.

Section 1 of the bill provides for the membership of the council, sets out its procedure, states its duties and responsibilities, and houses the council within the Office of the Attorney General. The council is required to make an annual report by December 1 to the Legislature and the Governor. The report shall summarize the distribution of funds, outcomes of

funded programs, and any recommendations for improving the process of appropriation and administration of settlement funds.

SB 2767 also amends Section 27-103-305 to provide that abatement settlement funds shall be disbursed upon appropriation by the Legislature in accordance with the requirements of Section 1 of this act. Nonabatement settlement funds shall be disbursed upon appropriation by the Legislature without any recommendations by the council regarding the use of those monies. For abatement settlement funds, the Attorney General shall oversee the expenditure of such monies to ensure compliance with the opioid settlements. For nonabatement settlement funds, the Attorney General shall have ultimate oversight authority to ensure that no more than 30% of the settlement monies are expended for nonabatement.

SB 2768. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

SB 2768 is one of two bills passed by the Legislature to fulfill its constitutional obligation to redistrict the circuit and chancery court districts of the state. SB 2768 redistricts the chancery court districts and HB 1544 redistricts the circuit court districts. SB 2768 also includes procedural language for both bills that govern the geographic boundaries of the district, the severability of the acts, and the purpose of the acts. Importantly, SB 2768 provides that the redistricting of each circuit and chancery court district shall be deemed to be separate and distinct from one another. Thus, the invalidity of any individual district of either the circuit or chancery courts shall not affect or require the redistricting of any other district.

Except as noted for the Fifth, Sixteenth, and Nineteenth Chancery Districts, the amendments to the chancery court

districts in SB 2768 take effect in January 2027 and are as follows:

Second. Under the bill, Covington, Jefferson Davis, Simpson, and Smith counties are added to the district. An additional chancellorship is added to the district for a total of three chancellors.

Third. Desoto County is removed from the district, and Carroll and Tallahatchie counties are added. A chancellorship is removed from the district for a total of two chancellors, and the subdistricts are deleted.

Fourth. Adams, Jefferson, and Wilkinson counties are added to the district. An additional chancellorship is also added to the district for a total of three chancellors.

Fifth. From and after January 1, 2031, the subdistricts are deleted from the district.

Sixth. Carroll County is removed from the district, and Webster County is added.

Seventh. Tallahatchie County and a chancellorship are removed from the district, and Sunflower County is added.

Eighth. Stone County is removed from the district.

Ninth. Sunflower County is removed from the district, and a chancellorship is also removed for a total of two chancellors.

Tenth. Forrest and Perry counties are removed from the district, and Walthall County is added. Further, the senior chancellor in the district is authorized to divide the court into separate divisions for the efficient handling of cases based on subject matter, judicial economy, or other factors.

Eleventh. Precinct geography is updated in the subdistricts of the district.

Thirteenth. All of the counties in the district are removed, and Forrest, Perry, and Stone counties are added to the district.

Fourteenth. Webster County is removed from the district, and the subdistricts are amended to reflect that removal and geographically connect Chickasaw and Oktibbeha counties in Subdistrict 14-1.

Fifteenth. Claiborne and Lawrence counties are added to the district, and an additional chancellorship is added to the district for a total of two chancellors.

Sixteenth. From July 1, 2025, until January 1, 2031, the local contributions required for the maintenance of the district shall be paid on a pro rata basis by each county in the district based on the proportion of that county's population to the district as a whole according to the most recent federal decennial census. The amount of these local contributions shall be determined by the Jackson County Board of Supervisors to be ordered by the senior chancellor of the district.

From and after January 1, 2027, an additional chancellorship is added to the district for a total of four chancellors.

From January 1, 2027, and until January 1, 2031, Greene County is removed from the district.

From and after January 1, 2031, George County is removed from the district.

Seventeenth. All of the counties in the district are removed, and Desoto County is added to the district. An additional chancellorship is also added to the district for a total of three chancellors.

Nineteenth. From and after January 1, 2027, an additional chancellorship is added to the district for a total of two chancellors.

From January 1, 2027, and until January 1, 2031, Greene County is added to the district.

From and after January 1, 2031, George County is added to the district.

SB 2771. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/24/25.

SB 2771 revises the timeline for permanency hearings and amends sections related to the State Defenders representation of certain youth. It amends Section 43-21-613 to revise the timeline for certain permanency hearings from within 120 days to within 3 months. The bill also authorizes the State Defender to provide representation to youth-in-delinquency and child-in-need-of-supervision proceedings. Last, it amends Section 43-21-201 to clarify the requirement that certain appointed counsel receive child protection and juvenile justice training and revise the number of cases that attorneys appointed by a youth court must have in order to be exempt from annual training.

SB 2787. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/24/25.

SB 2787 reenacts Section 75-24-351 through 75-24-357 which are the provisions of law that prohibit bad faith assertions of patent infringement and establish remedies for prevailing plaintiffs in civil actions instituted under the provisions. It also repeals Section 75-24-359 which had provided for a repealer on Sections 75-24-351 through 75-24-357.

SB 2886. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2886 enacts the Mississippi Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Law. The bill establishes a statewide domestic violence team within the Department of Public Safety and authorizes the establishment of circuit level teams established by judicial order within a circuit court district or districts.

The purpose of a team under this section shall be to learn how to prevent domestic violence through early intervention and improving the quality of the response by individuals and institutions to domestic violence. To do so, the team may determine its specific structure and operating procedures and is responsible for reviewing fatal and near-fatal incidents of domestic violence, related domestic violence matters, and suicides within its jurisdiction. The review may include an examination of events leading up to the domestic violence incident, available community resources, current laws and policies, and actions taken by organizations, agencies, and individuals incident to the events and the parties.

For the statewide team, the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety shall designate four other initial members and chair the initial meeting. At its first meeting, the initial members shall appoint additional members to the statewide team and elect a chair of the team.

SB 2886 also provides limited civil immunity for team members and addresses the civil and criminal testimony of certain other persons who attend and participate in meetings. It also provides procedures for information, testimony, records, reports, recommendations, or other evidence obtained, generated, or transmitted by a team and suggests a number of persons that a team may consider consulting with or including within its membership.

SB 2899. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2899 amends Section 9-13-19 to require court reporters in circuit and chancery court to be paid a certain salary. It also increases the authorized annual salary for court reporters as follows:

- Not to exceed \$59,400 for reporters who have five or less years' experience;
- Not to exceed \$72,200 for reporters who have more than five years' experience but less than 10 years; and
- Not to exceed \$76,800 for reporters who have 10 years or more of experience.

The bill also authorizes court reporters to engage in freelance reporting activities as long as the matter at issue is not under the jurisdiction of the court in which the official court reporter is appointed. If an official court reporter does not have delinquent work from the court of appointment and his or her attendance is not required in the court of appointment, the court reporter shall not be prohibited from engaging in freelance reporting activities.

HB 599. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

HB 599 authorizes liability for a commercial entity that knowingly and intentionally publishes or distributes obscene matter or matter that depicts, describes or promotes child pornography or child sexual exploitation on the internet. The entity may be held liable to an individual for nominal damages, actual damages, noneconomic damages, court costs and reasonable attorney's fees as ordered by the court.

The entity may also be held liable to an individual for punitive damages. The bill also allows individual claims that satisfy the generally applicable legal standards for joinder or class action to be combined into a single action.

HB 624. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 624 amends Section 25-31-10 to increase the salaries of full-time criminal investigators for district attorneys from \$63,000 to \$75,000.

HB 1063. Effective 1/1/26. Signed 3/25/25.

HB 1063 creates the Mississippi State Employees Paid Parental Leave Act, which provides for six weeks of paid parental leave for eligible state employees who are the primary caregivers of a child.

- "Eligible employee" is defined as a person who has been employed by the State of Mississippi or any agency, department or institution of the state for a minimum of 12 consecutive months in a position for which he or she is compensated on a full-time permanent basis and who is the primary caregiver of a child.

- "Paid parental leave" is defined as the compensated absence from work provided to an eligible employee for the birth of the employee's biological child, or legal adoption of a child under 18 years of age.

- "Primary caregiver" is defined as the parent who has the primary responsibility for the care of a child following the birth or adoption of a child.

- An eligible employee who is the primary caregiver of a child is entitled to receive six weeks (240 hours) of paid parental leave compensated at 100% of the employee's regular salary, to be used to care for the child after the birth or adoption of the child.

- The paid parental leave must be taken within 12 weeks of the birth or adoption of the child, and it may be taken only once in a period of 12 months.

- The paid parental leave is in addition to other leave benefits available to state employees by state or federal law and is not counted against accrued personal leave or major medical leave provided to state employees by statute.

- The paid parental leave will run concurrently with any leave provided to an eligible employee under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) where applicable.

- The paid parental leave will not be accrued or carried over or used for retirement purposes and is not payable upon separation from state service.

- An eligible employee requesting the paid parental leave under this section is required to give notice at least 30 calendar days before the anticipated leave start date, where foreseeable, to the employee's supervisor and human resources manager. If advance notice of 30 days is not possible due to exigent circumstances, the employee must notify the employee's supervisor and human resources manager at the earliest available opportunity.

- State employees are authorized to use up to six weeks of earned major medical leave for the birth of the employee's biological child, after using the paid parental leave authorized under this act for the birth or adoption of the child.

- The board of trustees of any public school district and the board of trustees of any community or junior college district is authorized to adopt a policy, in addition to any other leave policies of the district, to provide for paid parental leave for employees of the district that includes the same or substantially the same provisions as those of the Mississippi State Employees Paid Parental Leave Act.

HB 1197. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 1197 prohibits any person from soliciting in any municipality, county or political subdivision of this state without a solicitation permit issued by the municipality, county or political subdivision in which the solicitation will occur. The municipality, county or political subdivision is authorized

to charge a fee for the solicitation permit in an amount which shall not exceed \$25. The bill also sets forth the procedure for solicitation and authorizes local governments to opt out of the act.

Further, the bill creates the crime of "forgery of a solicitation permit" for making and using solicitation permits without the authority or permission of a municipality, county or political subdivision in which the solicitation occurs. The fine is limited to not more than \$300, imprisonment of not more than six months in the county jail, or both.

HB 1200. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

HB 1200 creates the "Real Property Owners Protection Act" to regulate the crime of squatting. It defines the term "squatter" and outlines the process to legally remove a squatter from property. It also states that the right to manage, control or receive payments for any use of real property shall only belong to the owner of the property or an agent designated by the owner for such purposes.

A person commits the crime of squatting when he or she trespasses onto property or is invited onto property and remains on the property without the consent or authority of the owner or an agent of the owner after being presented with written notification to leave the premises by the owner or an agent of the owner or the law enforcement agency of the municipality, county or political subdivision in which the property is located.

The process for expelling a squatter requires the owner of the property or his or her agent to file a sworn affidavit with the law enforcement agency of the municipality. If the person is determined to be a squatter, criminal and civil penalties may

be assessed, and the person shall move out by the court-ordered move-out date.

The bill creates crimes for:

- Any person who makes false statements when filing a complaint under this act;
- Any person who unlawfully detains, occupies or trespasses upon a residential dwelling and intentionally damages the dwelling in excess of \$1,000; and
- Any person, except an heir to the property, who lists or otherwise advertises real property for sale knowing that the purported seller has no legal title or authority to sell the property, or rents or leases the property to another person knowing that he or she has no lawful ownership in the property or leasehold interest in the property.

HB 1387. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1387 amends Sections 43-15-17 and 43-21-105 to expand who may receive monthly relative care payments from the Department of Child Protection Services when a child is placed in the care of a relative. More specifically, such payments may be received by any adult who is related by blood, marriage, or adoption within the third degree or who makes up the family support system of the child, including adults related beyond the third degrees, godparents, friends of the family, or other adults who have a strong familial bond with the child. Previously, relative care payments could only be received by a child's relative within the third degree.

Additionally, the bill revises the term of "fictive kin" to include adults related beyond the third degree, godparents, friends of the family, or other adults who have a strong familial bond with the child.

HB 1442. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1442 amends Sections 93-20-407 and 93-20-408 to require certain medical professionals from the Mississippi State Hospital, the North Mississippi State Hospital, East Mississippi State Hospital or any other state hospital to sign the certificates for mental health examination for a pending conservatorship if the respondent who is housed in a state hospital at the time a conservatorship petition is pending. It also amends Section 93-20-409 to grant access to the respondent's medical records from certain hospitals.

HB 1451. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1451 amends Section 43-21-205 to remove the prohibition against circuit and chancery court clerks from receiving compensation for attending youth court.

HB 1459. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/2/25.

HB 1459 amends Section 9-12-1 to authorize the Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court to appoint two full-time CCID judges. In addition, the Chief Justice may appoint one part-time judge for the CCID court, who shall serve for such time specified by the Chief Justice. Each judge is required to possess all qualifications required by law for municipal court judges. The Administrative Office of Courts shall provide compensation for all CCID inferior court judges and the support staff for the judges. The compensation of each full-time judge shall be in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 less than the compensation paid to county court judges. The compensation of the part-time judge shall be paid at an hourly rate and for such times as deemed necessary by the full-time CCID judges.

HB 1509. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1509 amends Section 25-3-35 to set the salary for district attorneys to 95% of the salary authorized by law for circuit and chancery court judges of this state.

HB 1544. Effective on Passage. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 1544 is one of two bills passed by the Legislature to fulfill its constitutional obligation to redistrict the circuit and chancery court districts of the state. HB 1544 redistricts the circuit court districts, and SB 2768 redistricts the chancery court districts. HB 1544 also revises the number of assistant district attorneys (ADAs) and criminal investigators assigned to certain circuit court districts.

The primary amendments to the circuit court districts are as follows:

First. The bill amends the residency requirements of the judges in the district.

Third. From and after January 1, 2031, an additional judgeship is added to the district for a total of four judges.

Fourth. From and after January 1, 2031, Holmes and Humphreys counties are added to the district.

Sixth. From and after January 1, 2027, Pike County is added to the district. An additional judgeship is also added for a total of three judges in the district.

Seventh. Until January 1, 2027, a judgeship is added for a total of five judges in the district. From and after January 1, 2027, Claiborne and Jefferson counties are added to the district. From January 1, 2027, until January 1, 2035, an additional judgeship is added to the district for a total of six judges. From and after January 1, 2035, a judgeship is removed from the district for a total of five judges. During this time, several revisions are made to the subdistricts in the district.

Also, the authority of the senior circuit court judge to divide the district into civil and criminal divisions is deleted. Last, two state-funded ADAs that were previously authorized only until July 1, 2025 in the district are made permanent in the bill.

Ninth. From and after January 1, 2031, Yazoo County is added to the district. Effective January 1, 2027, an additional, state-funded ADA is added to the district for a total of four state-funded ADAs.

Tenth. From and after January 1, 2027, Wayne County is removed from the district.

Eleventh. From and after January 1, 2031, the subdistricts within the district are revised.

Fourteenth. From and after January 1, 2027, Lincoln, Pike, and Walthall counties are removed from the district, and Covich, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, and Lincoln counties are added to the district. Upon passage, one state-funded ADA is removed from the district for a total of five ADAs.

Fifteenth. From and after January 1, 2027, Jefferson Davis and Lawrence counties are removed from the district, and Walthall County is added.

Eighteenth. From and after January 1, 2027, George, Greene, and Wayne counties are added to the district, and an additional judgeship is added for a total of two judges. Effective January 1, 2027, the district is authorized to employ two additional, state-funded ADAs for a total of four state-funded ADAs.

Nineteenth. From and after January 1, 2027, George and Greene counties are removed from the district, and an additional judgeship is added for a total of four judges. Further, one of the four judges, as designated by the senior judge of the circuit, shall be dedicated to intervention court with at least

75% of the cases on that judge's docket to be drug court eligible cases.

Twentieth. Upon passage, the district is authorized to employ three additional, local-funded ADAs for a total of five local-funded ADAs. From and after January 1, 2027, the district is authorized to employ three additional, state-funded ADAs for a total of ten state-funded ADAs.

Twenty-first. Until January 1, 2031, the district shall be designated as the Twenty-second Circuit Court District. Effective January 1, 2027, the district shall have four ADAs. From and after January 1, 2031, the district shall stand repealed.

Twenty-second. Until January 1, 2027, the district shall be designated as the Twenty-third Circuit Court District. From and after January 1, 2027, the district shall stand repealed.

Twenty-third. The district is redesignated as the Twenty-first Circuit Court District. Until January 1, 2027, an additional judgeship is added to the district for a total of three judges. From and after January 1, 2027, an additional judgeship is added to the district for a total of four judges. Effective January 1, 2027, the district shall have a total of seven state-funded ADAs.

NOTE: Please refer to the separate Summary of Judicial Redistricting Legislation to view the ways in which HB 1544 was amended by HB 49, 2025 First Extraordinary Session.

JUDICIARY, DIVISION B

SB 2200. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2200 deletes the repealer on Section 41-29-139.1, which provides for the crime of fentanyl delivery resulting in death. The bill also removes some legislative intent statements from the section and deletes the requirement of the Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review to annually report on the number of persons convicted under the section.

SB 2204. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2204 requires law enforcement in Mississippi to report the theft of agriculture-related items, including vehicles, livestock, timber, grain or certain chemicals, to the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau. It also requires any commercial dealer of agriculture-related vehicles to report the thefts of such vehicles to the bureau. Last, the bill amends Section 69-29-1 to direct the bureau to maintain a registry of reports of stolen agriculture-related vehicles.

SB 2208. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2208 amends Section 97-7-75 to provide an enhanced sentence of imprisonment for a person who makes a terroristic threat against an airport. A person convicted of the crime shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not less than five years in the custody of the Mississippi Department of Corrections in addition to the term of imprisonment already authorized by law.

SB 2210. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2210 amends Section 45-13-9 to enlarge the range of dates during which fireworks may be sold or offered for sale at

retail within the state. Under state law, fireworks may now be sold the between the 23rd of May to the 12th of July and between the 5th of December and the 9th of January. It also reduces the crime from a felony to a misdemeanor for violating the provisions of Article 1, Chapter 13, Title 45, which are the provisions of law regulating the sale of fireworks at retail.

SB 2211. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

SB 2211 provides that a victim of sexual assault shall have the right to be informed in writing of policies governing the collection and preservation of a sexual assault evidence collection kit. It also extends the notice period from 20 days to 60 days that law enforcement must provide to victims when the law enforcement agency intends to destroy or dispose of an evidence collection kit.

Another component of SB 2211 places certain requirements on hospitals. Each hospital in the state that operates an emergency department shall be required to have at least one staff member available at all times who is able to conduct forensic examinations of victims of sexual assault and prepare sexual assault evidence collection kits. Further, all licensed hospitals in the state shall screen, treat or examine victims of sexual assault who present to a hospital and shall maintain a sufficient supply of sexual assault evidence collection kits. Last, hospitals are authorized to contract with forensic nurses to conduct forensic examinations of victims of sexual assault.

SB 2311. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2311 creates the crimes of mail theft, theft or unauthorized reproduction of a mail receptacle key or lock, the theft or receipt of a stolen check or sight order, and traffic in or possession of counterfeit credit cards. The penalties for first-time convictions of these crimes are mirrored off of

existing penalties for credit card fraud.

The bill also imposes enhanced penalties for a second or subsequent violation of these new crimes as well as convictions under Sections 97-19-32 and 97-45-31.

Last, SB 2311 amends Section 97-21-23 to include within the crime of forgery using or having check-printing software or hardware with the intent to produce, make, design, or otherwise utter a counterfeit promissory note, bill of exchange, draft, check, bank check, certificate of deposit, or other evidence of debt, treasury note or monetary instrument.

SB 2315. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2315 amends several provisions related to bail procedure and provides when a bond shall be considered discharged. First, the bill amends Sections 21-23-8 and 99-5-25 to provide that if a clerk fails to provide a surety with notice of the forfeiture of the bond, the order shall be set aside, and the clerk shall accept a set-aside order on behalf of the surety for submission to the court. Also, all felony warrants issued for nonappearance shall be entered into the National Crime Information Center index until the defendant is returned to custody. Second, SB 2315 amends Sections 21-23-8, 83-39-7 and 99-5-25 to give an opportunity--before the surety's license is revoked--for a surety to submit proof to the Department of Insurance that a defendant has been surrendered to the appropriate authorities or that the bond has been paid directly to the court or other proper authorities.

Last, SB 2315 provides a list of circumstances when a bail bond is discharged. These circumstances include when:

- The defendant is found guilty and sentence is pronounced;
- The charge is dismissed or nolle prosequi;
- The charge is retired or remanded to the files;

- The defendant is surrendered by a bail agent in open court or to the sheriff or chief of police or respective jailer of the proper jurisdiction, or a verbal or written, including electronic detention, notice of surrender is delivered thereto as required in Section 99-5-27; or
- The defendant is sentenced to nonadjudication, an alternative sentence, or an intervention court program.

SB 2328. See summary under Judiciary, Division A heading.

SB 2803. Sections 1 through 8 of this act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2025, and Section 9 of this act shall take effect and be in force from and after January 1, 2026.
Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2803 amends Section 63-21-9 to require an owner of an all-terrain vehicle, manufactured or first sold for use after July 1, 2025, to apply to the Department of Revenue for a certificate of title. It also amends Section 63-21-5 to amend the definition of "motor vehicle" to include all-terrain vehicles, and to amend the definition of "all-terrain vehicle" to include utility task vehicles, also known as side-by-sides, for purposes of the Mississippi Motor Vehicle and Manufactured Housing Title Law.

HB 565. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 565 amends Section 45-6-11 to clarify the process for law enforcement agencies to report disciplinary matters to the Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training. It requires the law enforcement agency of any full or part-time law enforcement officer who resigns from his or her law enforcement agency to notify the board in writing and by email within 72 hours of the officer's resignation. If any law enforcement

officer is terminated or resigns due to disciplinary action, the law enforcement agency shall notify the board within 72 hours of the termination or resignation, and the agency shall provide in writing and by email to the board, the explanation for the termination or resignation of the officer. The required explanation of such termination or resignation shall be submitted, along with the required notification, within the same 72 hour time frame. If a law enforcement agency fails to adhere to the reporting requirements, then the agency shall not be eligible for state grants or other subsidiary funding provided by the state and shall not receive reimbursement for continuing education requirements as provided under Section 45-6-19.

The bill also authorizes the board to provide a hearing to any law enforcement agency that fails to adhere to the reporting requirements and promulgates all rules necessary for implementing the requirements of the bill.

HB 861. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 861 amends the Mississippi Medical Emergency Good Samaritan Act by creating and adding the "Aid to Sexual Offense Victim Reporting Act" in Section 41-29-149.1. It amends Sections 41-29-149.1 and 97-31-55 to provide criminal immunity for a person who, in good faith, seeks medical assistance for or reports a sexual offense. Such person shall not be arrested, charged or prosecuted for a drug violation if there is evidence that the person is or was under the influence of a controlled substance or in possession of a controlled substance at the time of the sexual offense or the request of assistance for or report of the sexual offense.

HB 1189. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1189 amends Section 99-19-75 to revise the deposits made into the Victims Of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual

Exploitation Fund by reducing the fines or other penalties for misdemeanor violations of Section 97-3-7 to a range of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000. Before the amendment, a misdemeanor violation of Section 97-3-7 was subject to a \$1000 fine. The bill also authorizes a court to allow a defendant to pay certain assessments in installments.

HB 1203. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1203 prohibits camping on any sidewalks, streets, sports fields, sports complexes, highways, alleys, roads, passageways or any other public property, except a public property that is otherwise designated for camping by a municipality, county, political subdivision or state, or by state law.

The bill also:

- Authorizes immediate removal of any person found in violation of the act;
- Authorizes any municipality, county, political subdivision or state agency, as applicable, to remove individuals, personal property, camping materials and campsites from public property consistent with the process outlined in the bill;
- Provides that whenever possible, any individual removed from a campsite be provided with available information concerning health, mental health, substance abuse treatment or housing resources;
- Requires the court, upon conviction of a person, to mitigate whether or not the person immediately removed all personal property and litter, including, but not limited to, bottles, cans and garbage from the campsite after being informed they were in violation of the law; and
- Requires a violator to demonstrate that after receiving the citation and before the hearing, he or she meaningfully

engaged with private resources and/or service providers to address the reason(s) that led him or her to be in violation, and requires the court to consider that information when determining the appropriate penalty.

HB 1308. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1308 creates the felony crime of "Grooming of a Child." Any person over the age of 21 commits the offense of grooming of a child when such person knowingly engages in a pattern of conduct or communication in person; through a third party; through the use of an electronic device, computer, social media or text messages; or by any other means to gain access to, to gain the compliance of, to prepare, to persuade, to induce or to coerce a child to engage in sexually explicit conduct or human trafficking or to procure the sexual servitude of a child. Any person who commits the crime shall be imprisoned in the Department of Corrections for not less than two years nor more than ten years, or fined not more than \$10,000, or both.

The bill also provides an enhanced penalty for any person who is 18 years of age or older and violates this section while that person was in a position of trust or authority over the child at the time of the offense. A person in a position of trust or authority over a child includes, without limitation, a child's teacher, counselor, physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, minister, priest, physical therapist, chiropractor, legal guardian, parent, stepparent, aunt, uncle, scout leader or coach. Under this enhancement, the person shall be imprisoned in the Department of Corrections for not less than five years nor more than ten years, or fined not more than \$20,000, or both.

Further, if a person who is a sex offender and required to register under Section 45-33-25 commits an offense under the

act, the person shall be imprisoned in the Department of Corrections for not less than 10 years nor more than 20 years, or fined not more than \$30,000, or both.

Last, the bill amends the definition of "child" and "morphed images" in Section 97-5-31 to delete the reference to "an identifiable child." It also deletes the definition of "identifiable child."

HB 1338. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1338 amends Section 25-1-87 to authorize governing authorities of any board or political subdivision of the State of Mississippi the authority to use specified, unmarked vehicles when identifying marks would hinder official investigations by a sworn law enforcement officer. The governing authority of any airport or school may authorize the use of unmarked vehicles when the identifying mark will compromise security at such airport or school. The order or resolution authorizing such unmarked vehicles shall contain the manufacturer's serial number, the inventory number, and shall set forth why the vehicle should be exempt from the provisions of this paragraph. The governing authority shall enter its order or resolution on the minutes and shall furnish the State Department of Audit with a certified copy of its order or resolution for the use of the unmarked police vehicle.

The bill also amends Sections 45-3-29 and 97-7-44 to increase the criminal penalties for impersonating a law enforcement officer. Last, it repeals Section 97-7-43 which was a duplicative section of law related to the impersonation of law enforcement officers.

HB 1637. See summary under Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks heading.

MEDICAID

SB 2392. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2392 amends Section 41-19-33, to authorize regional commissions to provide services through enhanced certification as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC). It clarifies that CCBHCs are to provide comprehensive, holistic services, respond to local needs, incorporate evidence-based practices and establish care coordination as a center for service delivery, including effective community partnerships with law enforcement, schools, hospitals, primary care providers, veterans' groups and other organizations to improve care, reduce recidivism and address health disparities. It authorizes and directs the Department of Mental Health and the Division of Medicaid to submit an application to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to join the CCBHC Demonstration Grant at the next available application period.

The bill provides that the CCBHC system shall be consistent with the demonstration program established by Section 223 of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) of 2014 and other applicable federal laws governing the CCBHC model. It charges the Department of Mental Health with certifying and monitoring compliance of CCBHC clinics, and it charges the Division of Medicaid with the responsibility of establishing a prospective payment system (PPS) to fund the CCBHC program.

SB 2396. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2396 amends Section 43-28-23, to prohibit the State of Mississippi or any agency or instrumentality of the state from being considered a creditor of, or seeking repayment for, any Medicaid benefits provided to a designated beneficiary from a

Mississippi ABLE account. It provides that a Mississippi ABLE account or funds distributed from such an account upon the death of a qualified beneficiary shall not be considered part of the "estate" of the beneficiary as that term is used in Section 43-13-317. It amends Sections 43-28-17, 43-13-120 and 43-13-317 to conform.

SB 2748. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2748 amends Section 41-137-3, to revise the definition of Mississippi Medical Cannabis Equivalency Unit (MMCEU) in the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act to designate one unit of MMCEU as one gram of total THC in a cannabis concentrate or one gram of total THC in an infused product. It amends Section 41-137-5, to authorize a health care practitioner to issue a written certification of a patient's debilitating medical condition after a telemedicine evaluation for patients who are homebound or bedbound as certified by a practitioner other than the practitioner making the written certification. The bill also amends Section 41-137-37, to prohibit an applicant for a medical cannabis establishment license from applying to a county or municipality for any action regarding zoning or permitting of a medical cannabis establishment until after the applicant has received a medical cannabis establishment license from the Mississippi Department of Health or the Mississippi Department of Revenue as applicable.

HB 610. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 610 revises certain provisions of the law that require vehicle permits and establishes standards for nonemergency medical transportation services as follows:

- Defines "nonemergency medical transportation (NEMT)" to mean transportation services provided to an individual who is not experiencing an emergency or in need of an ambulance for

transportation or transfer but does have a transportation need related to a covered health benefit.

- Revises the definition of "NEMT transportation service" to reflect that the service is designed to serve individuals who are physically or mentally unable to use regular means of transportation, instead of to individuals who are elderly or disabled and unable to use regular means of transportation.

- Provides that regular transportation, meaning nonemergency transportation provided to individuals who qualify for NEMT transportation services under a plan but who are ambulatory and need minimal assistance, is exempt from the requirements of the law if the transportation is provided by a Transportation Network Company licensed by the Department of Insurance or a contract carrier by motor vehicle permitted by the Public Service Commission and operating under a contract with a public or private entity, including Medicaid, for purposes of providing nonemergency transportation to ambulatory individuals.

- Provides that this law does not preclude an NEMT provider from using a permitted vehicle to provide services to ambulatory individuals.

HB 662. Effective on passage. Law without Governor's signature 3/25/25.

HB 662 revises the criteria for presumptive eligibility for Medicaid for pregnant women to conform to federal law and regulations. Specifically, it removes two provisions of the bill passed during the 2024 Regular Session: (1) the requirement that a pregnant woman provide proof of her pregnancy and documentation of her monthly family income, and (2) the 60-day limit on the period of presumptive eligibility after a health

care provider makes a determination that a woman is eligible for Medicaid.

MUNICIPALITIES

HB 733. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 733 establishes, in the State Treasury, the "Property Cleanup Revolving Fund," which is a grant fund that shall be administered by the Mississippi Home Corporation (here after referred to as the corporation.) The grant fund shall be funded from any funds appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legislature in any manner and funds from any other source whether or not designated for deposit into such fund.

This bill also provides that the corporation must establish a grant program utilizing the funds in the grant fund to assist municipalities with projects. Projects are defined as property cleanup conducted by a municipality or its contractors on property sold for taxes that has been certified to the state that may include the following:

- Cutting grass and weeds;
- Filling cisterns;
- Securing abandoned or dilapidated buildings;
- Removing rubbish, abandoned or dilapidated fences, outside toilets, abandoned or dilapidated buildings, slabs, certain personal property and other debris; and
- Draining cesspools and standing water from the property.

HB 733 also provides that grants from the grant fund may be made to municipalities as set forth in an agreement in amounts not exceeding 100% of estimated costs of a project. The corporation shall establish a maximum amount for any grant to provide for broad and equitable participation in the program.

Grants made from the fund may be used solely for the following purposes:

- To make grants upon receipt of an application from a municipality provided that a municipality may not receive more than 15 grants in any calendar year, but a grant may be used for more than one project in a municipality;
- To earn interest on fund accounts; and
- For the reasonable costs of administering the grant fund, which shall not exceed 3% of the grant.

The bill also provides that any municipality with a population in excess of 145,000, according to the 2020 United States Census, the Urban Renewal Authority and the Parking Authority with oversight of the Jackson Redevelopment Authority (JRA) is authorized to apply for grants under the program and to enter into agreements and take actions necessary to carry out site demolition and site preparation for the purposes of urban renewal. More specifically, grant funds must be used exclusively for site preparation and property cleanup with oversight of the funds from the Jackson Redevelopment Authority.

Any grant made to a municipality, which must be overseen by the Jackson Redevelopment Authority, shall not exceed \$2,000 per project, and no more than 15 grants may be awarded per calendar year to any such municipality or authority.

Next, HB 733 amends Section 29-1-145 by authorizing the Secretary of State to reimburse maintenance costs to counties or municipalities that exceed the market value of the lands or the purchase money received from the sale of those lands. Previously, counties and municipalities were only allowed to receive maintenance costs that did not exceed the market value of the lands or the purchase money received from the sale of those lands.

Section 29-1-145 is also amended by authorizing the Secretary of State to use, upon appropriation by the

Legislature, any monies deposited into the Land Records Maintenance Fund to contract with a vendor in accordance with the state competitive bidding process to maintain unredeemed lands sold for taxes while those lands remain unsold and lands sold for taxes that have been certified to the state. HB 733 defines the term "maintain" under this section as follows:

- Cutting grass, trees and/or limbs; or
- Repairing, clearing or demolishing structures and/or cleaning rubbish and debris.

Finally, HB 733 amends Sections 29-1-95 and 27-104-205 by restricting monies in the Land Records Maintenance Fund from lapsing into the State General Fund at the end of the fiscal year.

HB 1211. Effective on passage. Signed 3/6/25.

HB 1211 amends Section 21-13-3 to remove the requirement that a municipal ordinance granting a utility a franchise or right to use certain streets must be approved by a majority of the qualified electors in the municipality. The bill also removes the requirement that an ordinance must be read by the municipal clerk, upon request of two or more members of the governing authorities, before a vote is taken on that ordinance by the governing authorities.

PORTS AND MARINE RESOURCES

SB 2003. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2003 updates the requirements for the numbering of certain boats and vessels for the purpose of compliance with federal regulations:

- In addition to the requirements for the display of the awarded number for the vessel, the validation decal certifying the awarded number shall be displayed on each side of the vessel within six inches of the awarded number.
- Temporary certificates shall be carried on board when the vessel is being operated and shall have the following information:

- ▶ Name and full address of owner, including zip code;
- ▶ State in which vessel is principally operated;
- ▶ Type of propulsion;
- ▶ Length of vessel;
- ▶ Make of vessel;
- ▶ Signature of owner; and
- ▶ Date of issuance.

SB 2263. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2263 clarifies the authority of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources relating to the approval of oyster leases and clarifies that permitted oyster lease areas not subject to a lease shall remain open to the public.

The Department of Marine Resources may, in its discretion, lease an area to an applicant who has no experience in oyster cultivation as long as the applicant can demonstrate their financial stability and the area applied for has not been requested by another applicant with demonstrated experience.

The Department of Marine Resources shall have full jurisdiction and control of all designated state-owned reefs and oyster bottoms of the State of Mississippi. The department may lease up to 80% of the permitted areas available. Permitted areas not subject to a lease under this chapter shall remain open to the public.

HB 602. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 602 amends Section 69-1-55 to expand the country of origin labeling law for crawfish and shrimp to make it applicable to crawfish and seafood, which means saltwater finfish, crustaceans, molluscan shellfish, and other forms of saltwater aquatic animal life where such aquatic animal life is intended for human consumption.

This bill provides that any crawfish or seafood label, menu, sales display, or other advertisement must be designated as either domestic or imported. Any seafood or crawfish that originated in a foreign country outside of the territorial waters of the United States shall be identified as imported. If a wholesaler, processor, retailer, or food service establishment offers for sale only domestic seafood, then that may be disclosed in a prominent place on the premises.

This bill requires suppliers of crawfish and seafood to maintain a verifiable record-keeping audit trail that permits the Department of Agriculture and Commerce and the Department of Marine Resources to verify compliance with this law and any regulations promulgated under it. These agencies shall have collective regulatory authority over the crawfish and seafood labels.

Additionally, the bill provides penalties for violating the crawfish and seafood country of origin labeling requirements, which may include civil penalties as well as the revocation of a

license. Any wholesaler, processor, retailer, or food service establishment that knowingly violates any provision of this chapter, rule, or regulation, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not more than \$10,000, or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or both. Any wholesaler, processor, retailer, or food service establishment that unknowingly violates the section due to a good faith reliance upon the supplier's documentation of the seafood or crawfish's country of origin shall be held harmless against penalties. Fines and other monies collected for violations related to seafood shall be distributed to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and deposited into the Seafood Fund for promotion of the domestic seafood market and implementation, enforcement, and administration of this section. Fines and monies collected for violations related to crawfish shall be distributed to the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce for implementation, enforcement, and administration of this section.

The bill also establishes the Mississippi Seafood Marketing Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding seafood marketing and seafood production in the waters of Mississippi. The task force consists of the following people or their designees: the Governor, the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, the Executive Director of the Mississippi Gaming Commission, a representative of the Mississippi Restaurant Association, the Director of the Division of Tourism, a person with a valid commercial fisherman's license appointed by the Governor, and a person who is an active shrimp or seafood processor appointed by the Governor. The bill provides the duties of the task force and requires the task force to submit a report with recommendations for necessary

legislation to the Governor, Legislature, and affected state agencies on or before January 1, 2027, after which the task force will be dissolved.

HB 1095. Effective on passage. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1095 amends Section 29-15-11 to provide that any leases and/or subleases granted by or through the Department of Marine Resources under the provisions of Sections 49-15-27, 49-15-37, or 49-15-46 shall be exempt from any county or municipal tax levy upon the leasehold interests.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

SB 2392. See summary under Medicaid heading.

SB 2664. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2664 enacts into law the Dietitian Licensure Compact and provides that the State of Mississippi enter in the compact with other states that join in the compact. The purpose of the compact is to facilitate interstate practice of dietetics with the goal of improving public access to dietetics services. The bill provides various provisions related to the compact, including definitions, state participation in the compact, compact privilege, active military members or their spouses, adverse actions, establishment of a dietitian licensure compact commission and additional provisions. It also amends Sections 73-10-3, 73-10-7 and 73-10-15, to conform.

SB 2690. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2690 amends Section 43-13-407, to delete the repealer on certain provisions relating to the Health Care Expendable Fund.

SB 2691. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2691 amends Sections 97-32-5, 97-32-11 and 97-32-15, to prohibit the sale of tobacco or tobacco products to those under 21 years of age. It amends Section 97-32-23, to conform.

SB 2695. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2695 amends Section 73-67-39, to extend to July 1, 2029, the date of the repealer on the Mississippi Professional Massage Therapy Act.

SB 2697. Effective on passage. Signed 3/13/25.

SB 2697 amends Section 41-14-31, to extend through December 31, 2024, the expenditure period for reimbursement to hospitals

that increased treatment capacity related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SB 2698. Effective 6/30/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2698 amends Section 43-63-7, to extend through July 1, 2029, the operating period of the Mississippi Dementia Care Program.

SB 2699. Effective on passage. Signed 3/28/25.

SB 2699 repeals Section 41-121-11, which is the repealer on the Patient's Right to Informed Health Care Choices Act. It amends Sections 73-6-19, 73-9-61, 73-15-29, 73-19-23, 73-21-97, 73-26-5, 73-27-13 and 73-39-77, to delete the repealers on the provisions that make violations of the Patient's Right to Informed Health Care Choices Act by health care practitioners specific grounds for disciplinary action against licensees.

It creates the Mississippi Genetic Counselor Practice Act, which:

- Provides for the licensure and regulation of genetic counselors by the State Board of Health;
- Defines certain terms and the scope of practice of genetic counseling;
- Provides that from and after January 1, 2025, a license issued under this act is required to engage in the practice of genetic counseling;
- Prohibits persons from holding themselves out as genetic counselors unless they are licensed in accordance with this act;
- Prescribes the minimum qualifications for genetic counseling licensure;
- Provides for reciprocal licensure for persons who are licensed or registered as a genetic counselor under the laws of another state;

- Authorizes the board to grant provisional genetic counselor licenses for persons who have been granted active candidate status;
- Prescribes continuing education requirements for licensees;
- Provides exemptions from licensure for certain persons;
- Creates the Mississippi Council of Advisors in Genetic Counseling to advise the board and department on matters relating to the administration and interpretation of the provisions of this act;
- Prescribes the powers and duties of the board in administering the provisions of this act;
- Authorizes the board to deny, suspend or revoke licenses for certain conduct;
- Authorizes the board to receive and process complaints and investigate allegations or practices violating the provisions of this act;
- Authorizes the board to seek injunctive relief to prohibit persons from providing services as a genetic counselor without being licensed under this act; and
- Provides criminal penalties for violations of SB 2699.

Finally, SB 2699 establishes a task force to conduct a study of alternative funding programs and their effect on patient access to affordable prescription drugs in Mississippi.

SB 2704. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2704 amends Section 47-5-94, to require the State Department of Health, beginning July 1, 2025, to conduct an annual structural and environmental inspection of the infirmary at the State Penitentiary at Parchman and to make a report on its inspection as required by Section 47-5-94.

SB 2727. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

SB 2727 enacts into law the Social Work Licensure Compact and provides that the State of Mississippi enter in the compact with other states that join in the compact. The purpose of the compact is to facilitate interstate practice of regulated social workers by improving public access to competent social work services. The bill provides various provisions related to the compact, including definitions, state participation in the compact, social worker participation in the compact, issuance of a multistate license, authority of the interstate compact commission and member state licensing authorities, reissuance of a multistate license by a new home state, military families, adverse actions, establishment of a social work licensure compact commission and additional provisions. The bill amends Section 73-53-3, to define "licensed social worker," and amends Section 73-53-7, to conform.

SB 2729. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

SB 2729 establishes in the State Treasury a special fund to be known as the "Mississippi Public Health Trust Fund," to provide financial support for public health programs and services defined in the public health statutes. The bill provides that the fund shall consist of any monies appropriated to the fund by the legislature, any donations, gifts and grants from any source, and other monies received from any other source or which may be hereafter provided by law.

SB 2731. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/2/25.

SB 2731 amends Section 73-31-31, to extend to July 1, 2029, the date of the repealer on Sections 73-31-1 through 73-31-29, which provide for the licensure of psychologists. The bill also amends Section 73-31-5, to add two members to the Mississippi Board of Psychology.

SB 2741. Effective 7/1/25, except for Section 12, which is effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2741 provides for the licensure of professional music therapists by the State Department of Health, to be codified as a new chapter in Title 73, Mississippi Code of 1972. It defines terms, creates within the department the Musical Therapy Advisory Committee and addresses appointment and membership of the committee. The bill directs the department to seek advice of the advisory committee for issues related to music therapy, and it outlines the powers and duties of the committee.

Per SB 2741, beginning on January 1, 2026, no person without a license as a professional music therapist shall use the title "licensed professional music therapist," "LPMT" or a similar title that implies that the person is a professional music therapist. The bill sets forth certain requirements for professional music therapists in the provision of music therapy services and provides for licensure application, qualifications for licensure and license renewal. It lists acts for which the board may sanction a licensee and potential sanctions. Further, the bill directs the State Board of Health to set certain fees and for fees collected to be deposited in a special fund created in the State Treasury.

Finally, the bill creates the Mississippi Comprehensive Cancer Care Coalition (MCCCC) Task Force to develop and propose a plan for addressing cancer-related issues in the state. It provides for the membership of the task force and directs the task force to complete its plan for addressing cancer-related issues in the state and to present the plan, together with any recommended legislation, to the Legislature not later than December 1, 2025.

SB 2743. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2743 amends Section 41-57-57, to allow funds collected for certified copies of birth, death and marriage records to be used for public health programs pertaining to maternal, infant and child health and/or for the completion of all other vital records and statistics.

SB 2748. See summary under Medicaid heading.

HB 807. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 807 establishes the Division of Autism Services within the Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the State Department of Mental Health to develop and coordinate autism services for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families.

HB 807 specifies the powers and duties of the division as follows:

- To develop a long-term plan, reviewed annually, for a comprehensive statewide coordinated system of care for individuals with ASD that is derived from scientific-based research and nationally recognized best practices; and
- To ensure interagency collaboration, public participation, and mutual sharing of information to facilitate policy decisions and the implementation of a plan for a comprehensive statewide system of care to individuals with ASD.

HB 856. Effective on passage. Signed 4/23/25.

HB 856 extends to July 1, 2029, the date of the repealer on the Mississippi Pharmacy Practice Act and revises various provisions of the Pharmacy Practice Act as follows:

- Revises the definitions of the terms "device," "dispense" and "manufacturing" and adds a new definition for the term "pharmacy services administrative organization," which is

defined as any entity that contracts with a pharmacy or pharmacist to assist with third-party interactions and that may provide a variety of other administrative services.

- Authorizes the State Board of Pharmacy to delegate to the executive director of the board such powers and duties as it deems appropriate, and authorizes the executive director, with the approval of the board, to delegate to any officer or employee of the board such of his or her powers and duties as he or she finds necessary to carry out the purposes of the Pharmacy Practice Act.

- Clarifies the board's authority to regulate manufacturing of drugs, and provides that the board will regulate pharmacy services administrative organizations.

- Increases the amount of the surcharge that the board may add on a license renewal fee to fund an impaired pharmacists or pharmacy students program.

- Includes pharmacy services administrative organizations in the renewal license fee provisions.

- Clarifies that the board does not give the licensure exam but approves it.

- Clarifies that the board may impose a monetary penalty against a licensee, and includes interns/externs, pharmacy technicians, registrants and permit holders in the disciplinary provisions of the board.

- Exempts meetings of the Investigations Review Committee from the Open Meetings Act and exempts minutes of the meetings of the committee from the Public Records Act.

- Authorizes the board to issue subpoenas for the purpose of conducting investigations to obtain papers, documents, prescriptions or any other records deemed relevant to an investigation, and provides that all records of investigation

must be kept confidential and are not subject to discovery or subpoena.

- Authorizes the board to order summary suspension of an individual's license or registration or a permit of a facility without a hearing if the board determines that there is an immediate danger to the public, and requires a hearing to be held within 20 days of such action.

- Provides that if a board order is appealed, the appeal will act as a supersedeas as to any monetary penalty, but such person will not be allowed to practice pharmacy in violation of any disciplinary order while the appeal is pending.

- Removes the minimum amount of monetary penalties authorized by the board.

- Provides that penalties imposed by the board upon a person or business that practices or does business without the required license, registration or permit may be assessed beginning with the date that the offender first conducted business in the state.

- Clarifies that all entities involved in the supply chain of prescription drugs and/or devices that are sold or shipped into or out of this state, including manufacturers, manufacturer affiliates, packagers, repackagers, third-party logistic providers, wholesale distributors and reverse distributors, must be registered with the board.

- Provides that permits for those entities involved in the supply chain may be issued for up to a triennial period and increases the maximum fee for such permits.

- Provides that any pharmacy located outside this state that performs any services included in the definition of the practice of pharmacy for residents of this state will be

considered a nonresident pharmacy and must be permitted by the board.

- Authorizes the board to enter and inspect any facility identified in the supply chain that ships, or causes to be shipped, or receives any controlled substances or prescription or legend drugs or devices.

- Clarifies that entities located in this state or outside of this state that provide any home medical equipment to patients in this state must be permitted by the board.

- Deletes the provisions specifying the format and content of prescription forms.

- Deletes requirements for pharmacists to keep certain records about dispensing biological products and communicating that information to the prescriber.

- Provides that references to community pharmacies will instead be to charity pharmacies.

- Clarifies that the board will issue and renew licenses and permits for both in- and out-of-state persons, businesses and entities owning or shipping into, within or out of the state.

- Authorizes the board to use an outside agency to accredit all persons, businesses and facilities licensed or permitted with the board.

- Clarifies certain provisions relating to the Prescription Monitoring Program.

- Provides that the Prescription Monitoring Program will provide a report to the Legislature upon request that indicates the number of opioid prescriptions that were provided to patients during that year, instead of providing an annual report.

- Requires any entity assisting with the return of outdated drugs to a manufacturer on behalf of a pharmacy to register with the board and have a permit.

HB 1062. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1062 authorizes licensed dental hygienists to provide dental hygiene services to patients for up to 10 consecutive business days under the general supervision of licensed dentists if all of the following conditions are met:

- The dental hygienist must have practiced dental hygiene in Mississippi for a minimum of five years, with a minimum of 6,000 hours of dental hygiene practice;
- The supervising dentist must have examined the patient of record not more than seven months before the date that the dental hygienist provides the dental hygiene services;
- The dental hygienist must provide dental hygiene services to the patient of record in accordance with a written treatment protocol prescribed by the supervising dentist for the patient;
- The patient of record must be notified in advance of the appointment that the supervising dentist will be absent from the location;
- A dental hygienist under general supervision may not delegate to or supervise any dental hygiene duties for a dental assistant; and
- The supervising dentist is responsible for all actions of the dental hygienist during treatment of patients under general supervision.

The following limitations also apply to the practice of dental hygiene under general supervision:

- No entity may employ dental hygienists to provide treatment for patients of record under general supervision other than:

- ▶ A nonprofit entity that meets the statutory, regulatory and program requirements for grantees supported by the Public Health Service and that has supervision by a Mississippi licensed dentist; or

- ▶ An office owned by a dentist or group of dentists licensed in Mississippi.

- Dental hygienists are prohibited from practicing in a manner that is separate or independent from a supervising dentist, and from establishing or maintaining an office or a practice that is primarily devoted to the provision of dental hygiene services.

- A dentist may not supervise more than three dental hygienists under general supervision at any one time.

- A dentist may not supervise a dental hygienist for more than 10 consecutive business days or for more than 24 total days in any calendar year.

- A patient may not be seen twice consecutively under general supervision.

- An examination fee may not be charged if a patient is seen under general supervision.

- The patient undergoing dental hygiene services under general supervision must be a minimum of 18 years of age.

In addition, the State Board of Dental Examiners is authorized to assess the need for dental hygiene services in nursing facilities and correctional facilities and authorize the general supervision of dental hygienists in those facilities,

provided that such dental hygiene services are provided in accordance with all of the conditions of this act.

HB 1077. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1077 prohibits retailers, manufacturers, and wholesalers from selling or distributing a kratom product to an individual under 21 years of age. It also provides that kratom products offered for sale must be placed behind a retailer's counter and that every person engaged in the business of selling kratom products at retail must notify each individual employed by that person as a retail sales clerk that state law:

- Prohibits the sale or distribution of kratom products, including samples, to any person under 21 years of age and the purchase or receipt of kratom products by any person under 21 years of age; and
- Requires that proof of age be demanded from a prospective purchaser or recipient if the individual is not known to the seller, barterer, deliverer or giver of the kratom product to be the age of 21 years or older.

HB 1077 prohibits retailers, wholesalers, jobbers, distributors and manufacturers from preparing, distributing or selling any of the following:

- A product represented as being a kratom product that does not meet the definition for a kratom product under the bill;
- A kratom product containing a level of 7-hydroxymitragynine in the alkaloid fraction that is greater than 1% of the alkaloid composition and not to exceed one-half milligram per container of the product;
- A kratom product containing any controlled substance listed in the Uniform Controlled Substances Act, unless the product is compounded by a licensed pharmacist with the

controlled substance dispensed in accordance with a valid prescription; or

- Any kratom product that does not have a label that clearly sets forth the identity, address and telephone number of the manufacturer, and a full list of the ingredients in the kratom product.

Retailers, wholesalers, jobbers, distributors and manufacturers must register with the Department of Revenue prior to selling, distributing or exposing for sale a kratom product.

HB 1077 provides that any person under 21 years of age who falsely states he or she is 21 years of age or older, or presents any document that indicates he or she is 21 years of age or older, for the purpose of purchasing or otherwise obtaining kratom products will be guilty of a misdemeanor, and punished by a fine of not less than \$100, nor more than \$200, and a sentence to not more than 30 days community service. It also provides that any person under the age of 21 who purchases, receives or has in his or her possession any kratom product in any public place will be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not less than \$200 nor more than \$500.

A retailer or agent of a retailer, wholesaler, jobber, distributor and manufacturer that sells, stores or maintains kratom products, who violates or permits the violation of the provisions of the bill will be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 per violation.

Any municipality or county that enacted a ban and/or restriction on kratom products before July 1, 2025, will retain the authority to continue enforcing any such ban and/or restriction. The bill does not preempt, override or prohibit any future enactment of any ban and/or restriction by

municipalities and counties seeking to regulate, restrict or ban kratom products within their jurisdictions.

HB 1077 defines "kratom product" to mean a food or dietary supplement that consists of or contains kratom leaf or kratom leaf extract that does not contain any synthesized kratom alkaloids, other kratom constituents, or synthesized metabolites of any kratom constituent in which the level of 7-hydroxymitragynine, on a percent weight basis, is not greater than 1% of the amount of total kratom alkaloids, as confirmed with a high-performance liquid chromatography testing method and not to exceed one-half milligram per container. For the purposes of this definition, "synthesized" refers to substances produced using directed synthetic or biosynthetic chemistry, as opposed to traditional food preparation techniques such as heating or extracting.

HB 1094. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1094 exempts from Public Procurement Review Board approval contracts entered into by the State Department of Health for service on specialized equipment and/or software required for the operation of such specialized equipment for the use by the Public Health Laboratory.

HB 1262. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/6/25.

HB 1262 authorizes persons who have completed the training required for a United States Army Combat Medic Specialist, a United States Navy Hospital Corpsman, or a United States Air Force Aerospace Medical Service Specialist and then completed two years of clinical experience that involves providing direct patient care, to take the examination to be licensed as a licensed practical nurse.

HB 1401. Effective 7/1/25. Law without Governor's signature 3/11/25.

HB 1401 establishes a community health worker certification program in the State Department of Health with the following provisions:

- Requires the Division of Medicaid to seek approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for a state plan amendment, waiver or alternative payment model to provide reimbursement for the following services when provided by a certified community health worker who is employed and supervised by a Medicaid participating provider:

- ▶ Direct preventive services or services designed to slow the progression of chronic diseases, including screenings for basic human needs and referrals to appropriate services and agencies to meet those needs;

- ▶ Health promotion education to prevent illness or disease, including the promotion of health behaviors to increase awareness and prevent the development of illness or disease;

- ▶ Facilitate communications between a consumer and provider when cultural factors, such as language, socioeconomic status or health literacy, become a barrier to properly understanding treatment options or treatment plans;

- ▶ Educate patients regarding diagnosis-related information and self-management of physical, dental or mental health; and

- ▶ Conduct any other service approved by the department.

- Provides that the State Department of Health will be the sole certifying body for the community health worker profession and practice in Mississippi.

- Provides that from and after January 1, 2026, persons may not represent themselves as community health workers unless they are certified as such in accordance with the requirements of the department.

- Directs the department to promulgate rules necessary to carry out the provisions of the act, including establishing the core competencies of community health workers, the community health worker certification application and renewal process, certification application and renewal fees, procedures for certification denial, suspension and revocation, and the scope of practice for certified community health workers.

- Requires the department to approve competency-based training programs and training providers, and approve organizations to provide continuing education for certified community health workers.

HB 1404. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1404 provides an exemption from the requirement to have a pre-affidavit screening before a relative or interested person may file an affidavit for civil mental health commitment if the individual to be committed is being treated in a licensed hospital with licensed acute psychiatric beds and has already had two qualified professional evaluations, provided that the licensed hospital notifies the community mental health center that the individual is in the hospital at least 24 hours before filing the affidavit.

HB 1404 also requires a pre-affidavit screening to be conducted before an affidavit for emergency involuntary commitment of a person for alcohol or drug use may be filed, except that a pre-affidavit screening is not required if the individual to be committed is being treated in a licensed hospital with licensed acute psychiatric beds and has already

had two qualified professional evaluations, provided that the licensed hospital notifies the community mental health center that the individual is in the hospital at least 24 hours before filing the affidavit.

Finally, the bill requires community mental health centers to submit certain written quarterly reports to the boards of supervisors of each county in their region on a standard form developed and provided to the community mental health centers by the State Department of Mental Health.

HB 1447. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1447 authorizes the State Department of Health to increase the amount of fees for water quality analysis and related activities as required by the federal Safe Drinking Water Act to \$3.75 per connection or \$50,000 per system, whichever is less. The bill further authorizes the fee to be increased no more than one time during the next fiscal year, and requires that any such increase be based on the most recent increase in the Producer Price Index.

HB 1463. Effective on passage. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1463 amends Section 73-21-124 to require a manufacturer of pseudoephedrine or ephedrine that is lawfully sold in the state to pay to the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators a monthly fee, in an amount set by the association, to support the administration of the National Precursor Log Exchange (NPLEx). (The NPLEx is a near real-time logging and compliance system that tracks sales of over-the-counter cold and allergy medications containing pseudoephedrine or ephedrine). Upon request of the State Board of Pharmacy, a manufacturer required to pay the fee must provide written documentation demonstrating that it has done so.

HB 1530. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

HB 1530 amends Section 41-19-35 to authorize Mental Health Regional Commissions to be established with a set composition of members if each board of supervisors of the counties participating in a particular regional commission agree to such composition as evidenced by resolutions adopted by each board.

PUBLIC PROPERTY

SB 2297. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/7/25.

SB 2297 amends Sections 3-5-5 and 3-5-9 to provide for concurrent jurisdiction between federal and state governments over lands ceded to the United States.

Section 3-5-5 is also amended to require that notice in writing shall be given by the United States to the Governor stating the intent to relinquish jurisdiction. Such written notice shall include a clear statement of the subject matter for the concurrent jurisdiction request, specifically whether it includes juvenile delinquency and status offences; a metes and bounds description of the boundary of the concurrent jurisdiction request; and an indication whether the request includes future contiguous expansions of land acquired for military purposes. Section 3-5-5 is further amended to require that the Governor's written acceptance shall confirm each of the elements of the request that are accepted. Finally, Section 3-5-5 is amended to stipulate that upon the establishment of concurrent jurisdiction, any state or local agency may enter into an agreement with any agency of the United States for coordination and designation of responsibilities related to the concurrency.

Section 3-5-9 is amended to include all laws applicable to juveniles.

SB 2298. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2298 amends Section 31-7-13 to change language concerning decision procedures for "Mississippi Landmarks" to include "prequalified construction." Prequalified construction is considered construction procurement with a minimum construction cost of \$10,000,000 where the agency or governing

authority has determined that prequalification of bidders is in the best interest of the state. Further amendments require prequalification criteria to be limited to bidder's and proposed sub-contractor's knowledge and experience on projects of similar size and scope, past performance, project management team and financial stability.

SB 2300. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2300 amends Section 31-7-13.1 to change provisions concerning construction contracts. It removes language allowing the design-build method of construction contracting to be used on residential buildings, residential mixed-use developments, parking garages and other prescriptive type facilities. Additionally, new language requires public agencies or governing authorities to solicit proposals from qualified design-builders for each design-build project. Final contracts between the public entity and the design-builder must be either a fixed firm price or guaranteed maximum price contract that includes payment for both the design and construction phases of the project. Further amendments remove the requirement that the evaluation committee must have at least one architect or engineer among its members, as well as the words "an independent," which ensures that the provision applies to all professionals licensed in Mississippi and not just independent professionals.

SB 2303. Effective on passage. Signed 3/7/25.

SB 2303 authorizes the Department of Public Safety to purchase for fair market value real property located at 152 Watford Parkway in Canton, Mississippi, from the Madison County Economic Development Authority. DPS is authorized to negotiate any and all closing costs and may correct any discrepancies in the legal descriptions of the property provided in the bill. Finally, the real property and improvements acquired in this

bill must be used exclusively for state office space and parking purposes.

HB 556. Effective on passage. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 556 authorizes the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) to acquire specific real properties, known as the "East Hamilton Street Properties," located within the Capitol Complex in Jackson, Mississippi. DFA must obtain an independent appraisal to ascertain the fair market value of the properties, and the purchase price cannot exceed the average fair market value as determined by the appraisal. DFA is authorized to negotiate any and all closing costs related to the acquisition of these properties as well as correct any discrepancies in the legal descriptions of the properties to be purchased, which shall be used exclusively for state office space and parking purposes.

HB 1167. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 1167 renames several state facilities to honor individuals for their service to the state, including:

- **Facilities located at the State Fire Academy:**

- ▶ Education Building and Auditorium: renamed the "Honorable Mary Ann Stevens Education Building and Auditorium" to honor Representative Mary Ann Stevens for her contributions.

- ▶ Administration Building: renamed the "Commissioner George Dale Administration Building" to honor former Mississippi Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal, George Dale.

- ▶ Fire Station: renamed the "Reggie Bell Fire Station" to honor former State Fire Academy Executive Director, Reggie Bell.

► Apparatus Building: renamed the "Bill Warren Apparatus Building" to honor former State Fire Academy Executive Director, Bill Warren.

• **Mississippi Workers' Compensation Commission Building:** renamed the "Liles Williams Workers' Compensation Building" to honor Liles Williams for his service as former Chairman of the Mississippi Workers' Compensation Commission.

HB 1436. Effective on passage. Signed 3/21/25.

HB 1436 authorizes the Mississippi State Highway Commission, acting on behalf of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), to transfer specific parcels of land to the City of Gulfport, Mississippi. Existing utilities on, under or above the described properties shall remain at the discretion of the utility owners. The City of Gulfport and its successors cannot require relocation of these utilities without agreement from the utility owners. The State of Mississippi retains all mineral rights to the transferred properties and authorizes MDOT to correct any discrepancies in the legal descriptions of the properties. If the City of Gulfport decides to sell either parcel, MDOT holds the right of first refusal. Additionally, the bill amends prior legislation to correct the method of conveyance for a parcel to the Mississippi Transportation Commission, on behalf of MDOT, to reflect the transfer by means of donation of a specified parcel of land in Greene County to the Board of Supervisors of Greene County. The amendment to this section also allows the board to transfer the donated land to a private property owner in exchange for a similarly situated property of equal or greater value.

RULES

SB 2087. Effective on passage. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2087 repeals Section 1-1-58, which requires the Joint Committee on Compilation, Revision and Publication of Legislation to contract with a publishing company for the publication of the advance sheets of the General Laws of Mississippi enacted at each session of the Legislature, and to distribute or provide for the distribution of the advance sheets to certain parties.

TOURISM

SB 2383. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/21/25.

SB 2383 designates the sweet potato as the official state vegetable of Mississippi.

SB 2424. Effective upon passage. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2424 establishes the Entertainment Industry and Workforce Development Task Force, which is tasked with examining methods to grow the state's creative economy and increase revenue for and from the entertainment industry. The taskforce shall create and present recommendations for the Legislature to make changes to policies and appropriations that will help develop and grow the entertainment industry and workforce within the state.

The task force shall have 8 members who are appointed within 30 days of SB 2424 becoming effective. The task force shall meet and become organized within 45 days of SB 2424 being enacted. Meetings shall take place at the Capitol, or if it is not feasible to hold an in-person meeting, then the task force shall meet on an online platform that allows the meeting to be viewed by the public.

The task force shall have full cooperation from any agency, board, committee, department, division or institution that can provide the task force with information to assist it with carrying out its duties. The Legislature shall provide all necessary clerical support to the task force. The task force shall deliver a report with its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2025.

TECHNOLOGY

SB 2426. Effective on passage. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2426 creates the Artificial Intelligence Regulation (AIR) Task Force. It establishes the membership of the task force, including both voting and ex officio nonvoting members and sets guidelines for meetings. The task force is responsible for balancing innovation and public interest while endeavoring to mitigate risks and unintended consequences of AI and its regulation. Members shall receive a per diem as provided in Section 25-3-69. PEER will provide necessary clerical support for the task force. The task force is authorized to apply for and accept gifts, grants, subsidies and other funds, and if funds are sufficient, may hire additional contract staff to support its work. Because the work of the task force is related to sensitive matters of security, the meetings, work and findings of the task force are not subject to the requirements of Chapters 41 or 61 of Title 25, Mississippi Code of 1972.

SB 2426 also defines the term "artificial intelligence" for the purposes of the task force, giving it the meaning set forth in 15 USC § 9401(3).

The responsibilities of the task force are to:

- Facilitate and evaluate through comprehensive review, develop tentative drafts of any necessary proposed revisions to the Mississippi Code involving the regulation of AI technologies, which may or may not include the following:

- ▶ Fostering innovation by providing an environment for businesses and organizations to develop and test AI systems under relaxed regulatory constraints;

- ▶ Regulatory oversight of the designing, testing and refinement of regulations to ensure responsible AI deployment;

► Collaborating with stakeholders to bridge communication and idea exchanges between developers, policymakers and the public to align AI innovation with ethical and societal goals; and

► Any other areas as deemed necessary by the task force.

- Review laws, policies and procedures concerning the use of AI technology established by the United States Congress and other state legislatures, if any, and compile a list of recommendations to include in the report required by this act. The review shall focus on, but not be limited to focusing on, privacy and data protection, development for a framework for AI testing, compliance with ethical standards which enforce adherence to fairness, accountability, transparency, disclosures and promoting equitable outcomes, assessment of risk and benefits which measure the societal and economic impact of AI innovations, liability, constituent and consumer impact, bias and social impact, and copyright and provenance.

- Consider implementation and use of artificial intelligence in state government agencies and compile a list of recommendations of best practices and potential uses for AI technologies in government to include in the report required by this act.

- Consider ways to allocate funding for development and use of artificial intelligence technologies in the state and draft proposals accordingly to include in the report required by this act.

- Consider any other issues related to artificial intelligence technologies that the task force finds appropriate to address.

SB 2835. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2835, the Mississippi Emergency Communications Act, establishes the Mississippi Emergency Communications Authority (MECA) to work in cooperation with state and local governments to create a technical and operational framework for implementing and operating an interoperable and interconnected NG911 public safety network. MEMA is the ultimate authority and administrative head of MECA. The bill vests management of the authority in an appointed director, with an advisory board to offer technical guidance and recommendations. It describes terms of the board members and prescribes qualifications for appointments to the board.

Section 5 requires the authority to administer, receive and audit emergency communications service charges, as well as develop, establish and publish a defined scope, technical standards and operation requirements for a State NG911 Plan. Furthermore, the authority must also publish minimum standards, specifications and requirements for each ECD NG911 Plan.

Section 6 outlines the duties and responsibilities of MECA, including the duty to:

- Develop and adopt an annual budget for implementation, management, upgrades, deployments and operations consistent with the State NG911 Plan. Such plan must be submitted to and approved by the Legislative Budget Office;
- Apply for, receive, and use federal grants, state grants or both;
- Study, evaluate and establish technology standards for regional and statewide provision of a public safety communications network and NG911 systems;
- Review and revise technology standards based on orders and rulings by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC);

- Identify and recommend changes to accomplish a more effective emergency communication service across the state;
- Identify and recommend any changes necessary in the assessment and collection of emergency communication service charges and provide a report to the Legislature;
- Develop, offer or make recommendations to the Mississippi Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training according to Section 19-5-351 and other state agencies about standardized training that should be provided to telecommunicators, trainers, supervisors and directors of Public Safety Answering Points;
- Recommend minimum standards for the operation of public safety answering points, develop and implement an internal quality assurance program and monitor local and regional PSAP compliance with technical and operational standards, requirements and practices;
- Collect data regarding the performance and operation of public safety answering points and coordinate with ECDs to provide technical assistance when requested;
- Identify any necessary changes or enhancements to the State NG911 Plan;
- Establish policies and procedures to develop and implement a plan to provide NG911 services statewide;
- Investigate Geographical Information Systems Standards and mapping and incorporate them, as well as other resources, into the State NG911 Plan;
- Address adverse findings in ECD financial and program reports and order such action as may be necessary to remedy the adverse findings; and

- Develop a CMRS Implementation Grant Program to provide the State NG911 Fund and ECDs competitive grants for NG911 implementation consistent with the State NG911 Plan and an approved ECD NG911 plan.

Section 7 of SB 2835 establishes the NG911 CMRS Grant Fund for the purpose of defraying costs associated only with capital improvements, equipment, software and other expenses directly related to implementation of approved ECD NG911 plans.

Section 8 stipulates that MECA shall:

- Require each ECD to submit a plan to implement a NG911 program consistent with this act. The ECD may obtain technical assistance from the authority in formulating its plan.

- Identify and define all ECDs created in Section 19-5-315 throughout the state by geospatial layer.

- Make and execute contracts necessary to exercise the powers of the authority or to further the public purpose for which the authority is created.

- Acquire by purchase, lease, or otherwise and hold, lease, and dispose of real or personal property of every kind and character, or any interest therein, in furtherance of the purpose of the authority.

- Apply for and accept any gifts or grants, loan guarantees, loans of funds, property, or financial or other aid in any form from the state or federal government.

- Deposit or otherwise invest funds held by the authority in any state depository or in any authorized investment of proceeds of state general obligation bonds and use such funds for its corporate purposes or redeposit or reinvest interest earned on such funds.

- Administer the NG911 CMRS Grant Fund and the State NG911 Fund.

- Retain a portion of the total service charges remitted to the department from the emergency communications service charge and deposit such funds into a special fund established in the State Treasury to be designated the "State NG911 Fund" to be used for the purpose of administration and operations of the authority and costs directly associated with the implementation and/or maintenance of the State NG911 Plan.

- Receive, manage and control the fund established in the State Treasury designated as the "Emergency Communications Public Safety Trust Fund" pursuant to Section 13 of SB 2835.

- Establish and maintain a distribution formula for the department to make disbursements from the "Emergency Communications Public Safety Trust Fund" to the ECDs.

- Receive and maintain from the department a registration database of all service providers and notify the department as necessary of any provider that fails to comply with the requirements of SB 2835.

- Promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to effect the provisions of SB 2835.

Furthermore, SB 2835 stipulates that all monies received by the authority shall be deemed to be trust funds, and that SB 2835 shall be liberally construed to effect its purposes. SB 2835 stipulates that all information submitted to MECA is subject to review only by the authority and the department. Additionally, the Attorney General will provide legal services for MECA.

Section 13 outlines the emergency communications service charge levied by the state on residential telephone subscriber lines, commercial telephone subscriber lines, Voice over Internet Protocol subscriber accounts, CMRS connections and prepaid wireless telecommunications service purchased in a

retail transaction. It also provides for audit and appeal procedures applicable to the service charges, as well as for disbursement of funds collected via the charge to individual ECDs. Finally, Section 13 also provides for liability concerning collection of the service charge.

SB 2835 also provides that anyone who knowingly uses or attempts to use wireless emergency telephone service for an invalid purpose is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Sections 16 through 18 create requirements for individual ECDs, including use of funds, development and submission of annual financial and program reports, and adoption of a district NG911 plan.

Sections 19-5-305, 19-5-307, 19-5-315, 19-5-317 and 33-15-14 are amended to conform.

Sections 19-5-303, 19-5-311, 19-5-313, 19-5-331, 19-5-333, 19-5-335, 19-5-337, 19-5-339, 19-5-341 and 19-5-343 are repealed at varying times to allow for seamless rollover to the new system.

HB 1491. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1491 establishes the Cloud Center of Excellence Act.

Section 2 defines terms used in the act.

Section 3 establishes the Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE) which will serve as a centralized body within ITS, providing strategic guidance, best practices, governance frameworks and technical support for cloud adoption and management across state entities. The CCOE is designed to facilitate the adoption and management of cloud computing across state agencies and governing authorities, aiming to enhance security, scalability and cost efficiency in statewide cloud operations.

Section 4 provides that the CCOE is tasked with establishing a two-year phased implementation plan to be completed by July 1, 2027, which shall include:

- Conducting statewide readiness assessments and developing detailed cloud migration plans for pilot agencies;
- Initiating pilot migrations for selected state agencies, establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) and refining processes based on feedback;
- Expanding cloud adoption to additional state agencies, focusing on optimizing resource utilization and ensuring adherence to best practices;
- Integrating governing authorities into the cloud ecosystem and providing support for local governments, postsecondary educational institutions and school districts; and
- Achieving full statewide adoption of cloud services, with ongoing monitoring, training and optimization provided by the CCOE.

During the implementation period, each state agency and governing authority is required to consider cloud computing service options with security benefits and cost savings associated with purchasing those options from a cloud computing service provider and from a statewide technology center established by ITS, and cloud computing service options and compatibility with cloud computing in the development of new information technology software.

The bill requires state agencies and governing authorities, when making purchases of an automated information system, to ensure that the system is capable of deployment and operation on cloud computing services. The bill requires agencies and governing authorities to submit a report that describes each purchase of an automated information system and the agency's

reasoning for making the purchase to the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) at least 14 days before the date a state agency or governing authority will solicit bids, proposals, or offers, or expresses an interest for a purchase.

ITS is required to provide administrative support and oversight to the CCOE to ensure compliance. Additionally, ITS is authorized to enter into agreements with cloud service providers to facilitate cost-effective procurement of cloud solutions, to develop and enforce statewide cloud security and compliance standards, to establish funding mechanisms to support operations of the CCOE, and to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to administer this act.

Section 5 requires ITS to submit biennial reports to the Governor and the Legislature by November 15 of each even-numbered year, detailing the progress of the CCOE, including metrics on cloud adoption, cost savings, security enhancements and recommendations for further improvements. State agencies and governing authorities are mandated to cooperate with ITS by providing timely and accurate information to assist in the creation of these reports.

Section 6 requires the Legislature to appropriate funds to the Department of Information Technology Services to implement and operate the Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE), and further authorizes the CCOE to seek additional funding through federal grants, partnerships and other available resources.

Section 7 amends Section 25-53-3 to conform definitions related to information technology services with the establishment of the CCOE.

Section 8 establishes the Technology Innovation Fund to be administered by ITS in order to support the development and deployment of innovative technological solutions that enhance

the efficiency, transparency and responsiveness of government services. The fund is intended to support collaborative efforts between government agencies, educational institutions, private sector partners and nonprofit organizations in implementing digital solutions that drive public sector modernization. The CIO of ITS is charged with establishing criteria for the evaluation of proposals and the allocation of funds, with priority given to projects that improve government operations, demonstrate scalability and sustainability potential, foster partnerships across government, private and nonprofit sectors, and address urgent service delivery, efficiency and cybersecurity challenges. Additionally, the CIO is required to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature detailing the use of the Technology Innovation Fund, including descriptions of funded projects, their outcomes and recommendations for future innovations.

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

SB 2216. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2216 amends Section 37-101-15 to remove the date of repeal on the provision of law authorizing the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning to administer and approve contracts for the construction and maintenance of buildings and facilities owned by the institutions which are funded in whole or in part by general obligation bonds of the State of Mississippi at institutions designated annually by the board as being capable to procure and administer all such contracts.

SB 2517. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 4/23/25.

SB 2517 amends the Mississippi Intercollegiate Athletics Compensation Rights Act.

Section 37-97-103 is amended to define "athletics financial aid agreement," "athletics-related revenue," and "revenue sharing agreement."

Additionally, SB 2517 allows an institution to share a portion of the institution's athletics-related revenue with a student-athlete or compensate a student-athlete for publicity rights. Further, amendments require that a student-athlete have signed an athletics financial aid agreement with the institution prior to making any agreement with a third-party for compensation for the use of a student-athlete's publicity rights. SB 2517 also amends provisions to include student-athletes who have given notice to their institutions of an intent to transfer.

Finally, SB 2517 stipulates that a person or entity who violates this bill is liable to the postsecondary educational institution where the student-athlete is enrolled or has signed

an athletics financial aid agreement. Lawsuits may be initiated in a state court where the initiating institution is located. By giving or offering to share revenue or compensate a student-athlete enrolled at the university, the parties also consent to the personal jurisdiction of the state court.

SB 2518. Effective on passage. Signed 4/10/25.

SB 2518 requires the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning to develop and report to the Legislature policies, procedures, and a list of recommended legislative changes for the purpose of promoting and completing public-private partnerships between institutions of higher learning and private entities for long-term leases. These leases shall include projects for developing buildings, housing, parking garage facilities, dining halls, and/or other retail spaces. Such report shall be made to the Legislature on or before October 1, 2025.

Additionally, SB 2518 amends Section 31-11-3 to increase the amount of available bond funds that DFA is authorized to transfer to each community college requesting to be exempt from DFA control and supervision for repair, renovation, and improvement of existing facilities owned by the community colleges up to \$3,000,000. This increase in amount shall stand repealed on July 1, 2028.

SB 2519. Effective on passage. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2519 authorizes the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, acting on behalf of the University of Mississippi, to enter into a long-term lease of five parcels of real property. Such lease shall be for a period not to exceed 45 years with two additional options for renewal periods not to exceed ten years and one additional option for a renewal period not to exceed five years. Such lease may be

entered into for the purposes of developing buildings, housing, parking garage facilities, dining halls and/or other retail developments, and/or other spaces for the benefit of the university. The university is authorized to negotiate all aspects of the lease or sublease with the approval of the IHL Board. Furthermore, all proceeds derived from agreements shall be deposited into a special fund and expended only for the use and benefit of the university. At the end of the lease, the property shall be reverted to the university. The state of Mississippi shall retain all mineral rights, and DFA is authorized to correct any discrepancies in the property descriptions included in this act.

SB 2525. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2525 amends Section 75-60-5 to include the new joint Board of Cosmetology and Barbering in a list of exceptions to Chapter 60 of Title 75. Furthermore, Section 75-60-5 is also amended to clarify that nonvocational schools are exempt from registering with the Commission on Proprietary School and College Registration.

SB 2526. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

SB 2526 amends Section 37-103-25 to allow nonresident students to fully participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program and receive funds. It stipulates that nonresident veterans who qualify for Yellow Ribbon Program funds shall be charged nonresident tuition provided by the institution or community and junior college.

HB 3. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 3 amends Section 37-101-241 to revise the composition of the Mississippi Commission on College Accreditation (MCCA), in order to ensure representation from all postsecondary

educational sectors registered with the commission. The commission now includes four additional members selected by the Executive Director of the Mississippi Community College Board, the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Executive Director of the Mississippi Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities, in their official capacities as permanent commission members, to represent public community and junior colleges, universities, private colleges and proprietary schools. The four additional members will each serve a term of three years.

HB 1193. Effective on Passage. Signed 4/17/25.

HB 1193 prohibits public schools and public postsecondary educational institutions from engaging in discriminatory practices. It requires the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning, the Mississippi Community College Board, the Mississippi State Board of Education and the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board ("boards" or "board," as necessary) to ensure that each institution, college and public school, as applicable, refrains from divisive teaching and training based on an individual's race, sex, color or national origin.

Additionally, HB 1193 requires each board to teach and establish policies and curriculum in accordance with the definitions of the terms "female," "male" and "sex" as provided in Section 1-3-85 and Section 41-141-3(a).

Section 5 of the bill establishes exceptions, noting that nothing in the act may be construed to apply to and/or prohibit:

- Programs for military veterans, students with disabilities or students presently or formerly under a child protective services order;

- Scholarly research or a creative work by students, faculty, employees or staff members at an institution, college or public school or the dissemination of that work;
- An activity of a registered student organization, guest speaker or performer at an institution, college or public school as long as state funds are not used;
- A policy to limit or restrict freedom of speech pursuant to the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or Section 13 of the Mississippi Constitution or academic course instruction that undermines the duty of a public school, or public postsecondary educational institution to protect academic course instruction, intellectual diversity and true expression, provided that none of these protected tenets conflict with the act;
- Data collection or reporting of demographic data by a public school or public postsecondary educational institution;
- Student recruitment;
- Programs, campus activities or certifications for compliance with state and federal laws or applicable court orders;
- An institution, college or public school from requiring or taking action against a student, employee, faculty, staff member or contractor for failing to comply with federal or state law;
- Discussing pathological approaches or experience with students with mental or physical disabilities; or
- A public school or public postsecondary education institution from complying with any applicable academic accreditation standards or requirements.

Furthermore, HB 1193 requires each board to adopt a complaint process, investigative procedures and other policies and procedures for appropriately investigating alleged violations of the act. Any employee, faculty member, staff member, contractor or student may file a complaint within 30 days of a violation. Depending on the outcome of the board's investigation, certain aggrieved parties may also seek judicial review. Complainants are limited to any enrolled students, faculty members, employees, staff members, or contractors at an institution, college or public school, or any parent, guardian or next friend thereof.

Finally, beginning in 2026, each board is required to report to the Legislature an annual report summarizing all formal complaints and the dispositions of those investigations by October 30 of each year, following reported violations at each individual school, college or institution.

VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

SB 2052. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2052 authorizes license tags for disabled veterans to be labeled as "100% Disabled Veteran" or "Disabled Veteran." A legal resident of the State of Mississippi who is rated as having 100% permanent service-connected disability by the Veteran's Administration or United States Department of Veterans Affairs is privileged for the tag, purchased under this section, to have the label "100% Disabled Veteran" or "Disabled Veteran" listed on the tag.

SB 2434. Effective on passage. Signed 3/6/25.

SB 2434 authorizes counties and municipalities to enter into intergovernmental support agreements with military branches. A local government unit, including municipalities and county boards of supervisors, may enter into intergovernmental support agreements with a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States under the National Defense Authorization Act, 10 USC § 2679, to provide installation support services to a military installation located in this state.

HB 1268. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/28/25.

HB 1268 creates the Mississippi Save Our Service Member Task Force. The purpose of the task force is to unite key stakeholders in order to assess the mental health needs of military veterans and current members of the Mississippi National Guard and to develop a strategic plan and proposed legislation addressing mental health issues and the prevention of suicide.

The task force will be composed of the following members:

- The Chairs of the House Military Affairs Committee and the Senate Veterans and Military Affairs Committee, or their designees from their respective committee membership;
- The Chairs of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee and the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, or their designees from their respective committee membership;
- The Executive Director the State Department of Health, or the director's designee;
- Two psychiatrists experienced in treating service members confronting mental health issues or suicidal ideation, or both, with one member being appointed by the Governor and one member being appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;
- Two chaplains in the Mississippi National Guard, appointed by the Adjutant General;
- One company grade military officer with command experience, appointed by the Adjutant General;
- One noncommissioned officer with first sergeant experience, appointed by the senior enlisted advisor for the Mississippi National Guard;
- One field grade officer with battalion commander experience, appointed by the Adjutant General;
- One noncommissioned officer with commander sergeant major experience, appointed by the senior enlisted advisor for the Mississippi National Guard;
- One employee of a university counseling center, or a person otherwise responsible for coordinating or providing student mental health services on campus, appointed by the Governor; and

- One employee of a community mental health provider that provides services to veterans and service members, appointed by the Governor.

The task force will perform the following duties:

- Assess the needs of Mississippi's military force by gathering input from veterans and current National Guard members about mental health challenges and reviewing existing resources and identifying gaps in mental health support services and suicide prevention efforts;

- Consult with faculty and researchers at universities and colleges who are studying and researching the psychology of PTSD and traumatic brain injury, particularly in relation to service members' mental health and to suicide prevention efforts;

- Review and make recommendations on how to identify PTSD and suicidal ideation in veterans and current National Guard members and on methods to prevent suicide;

- Identify partnering opportunities that will lead to improved mental health services and suicide prevention efforts accessible to veterans and National Guard members;

- Identify ways to reduce mental health stigma by promoting education and awareness to veterans, National Guard members and their families, and the general public;

- Develop programs and policies to mitigate mental health issues at the various military leadership levels;

- Formulate recommendations on changes to laws and policies in the State of Mississippi which will create opportunities for better identification of indicators signaling possible mental health concerns and suicidal ideation among veterans and current National Guard members; and

- Research and develop recommendations pertaining to any other issues that, in the determination of the task force, are relevant to improving mental health and suicide prevention services available to veterans and current National Guard members.

The task force will make a final report of its findings and recommendations, including any recommended legislation and funding needs, to the Legislature before January 1, 2026, at which time the task force will be dissolved.

The bill creates the Mississippi First Responder PTSD and Suicide Prevention Task Force. The purpose of the task force is to unite key stakeholders in order to assess the mental health needs of first responders and develop a strategic plan and proposed legislation. The task force will review and make recommendations on how to identify PTSD and those contemplating suicide and on methods to prevent suicide for Mississippi's first responders. The task force also will identify methods to effectively provide treatment for first responders. For purposes of the bill, "first responders" includes law enforcement officers, firefighters, 911 dispatchers, members of the Mississippi National Guard, and emergency medical services.

The task force will be composed of the following members:

- Three members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee appointed by the chair of the committee;
- Three members of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee appointed by the chair of the committee;
- One employee of the State Department of Health appointed by the executive director;
- One employee of the State Department of Mental Health appointed by the executive director;

- One employee of the Mississippi Department of Human Services appointed by the executive director;
- The Medical Director and the Director of the Office of Standards and Training of the Department of Public Safety, or their respective designees;
- One employee of the Office of the Attorney General appointed by the Attorney General;
- Two members, who must be therapists, appointed by the First Responders of Mississippi organization;
- One member of the Mississippi Association of Chiefs of Police appointed by the president;
- One member of the Mississippi Sheriffs' Association appointed by the president;
- One member of the Mississippi Fire Chiefs Association appointed by the president;
- One member of the Professional Firefighters Association of Mississippi appointed by the president;
- One member of the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Association appointed by the president;
- One member of the Mississippi National Guard appointed by the Adjutant General of Mississippi; and
- One employee of a member of the Mississippi Ambulance Alliance appointed by the president.

The task force will perform the following duties:

- Assess the needs of first responders by gathering input from first responders about mental health challenges and reviewing existing resources, and identifying gaps in mental health support services;
- Develop a plan to address identified needs by creating a detailed plan for programs and services that will support first

responders' mental health, and identify strategies to make mental health services accessible, affordable, and effective;

- Foster collaboration among stakeholders by bringing together first responders, mental health professionals, and policymakers to identify solutions and propose legislation;
- Identify ways to reduce mental health stigma by promoting education and awareness;
- Ensure oversight and sustainability of programs by establishing a system and recommending an agency or entity to monitor program effectiveness and make needed improvements, and secure funding and resources in order to ensure programs can continue long-term; and
- Recommend relevant changes to Mississippi law and other state and local policies which can be implemented by state and local governmental entities.

The task force will make a final report of its findings and recommendations, including any recommended legislation and any funding needs, to the Legislature before December 1, 2025, at which time the task force will be dissolved.

WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS

SB 2276. Effective on passage. Signed 3/12/25.

SB 2276 amends Sections 49-7-31, 49-7-31.2, 49-7-31.3 and 49-7-31.4, respectively, to extend the open seasons on deer, bobwhite quail and wild turkey, squirrel and rabbits, and fur-bearing animals, when ending on a Friday, to 30 minutes after sunset on the following Sunday.

SB 2280. Effective 7/1/25. Signed 3/20/25.

SB 2280 imposes the requirement of procuring a wild turkey stamp before hunting wild turkeys in the state. It exempts residents who have not reached the age of 16 or who have reached the age of 65, or any resident who is blind, paraplegic or a multiple amputee, or who has been adjudged by the Veterans Administration as having a total service-connected disability, or who has been adjudged to be totally disabled by the Social Security Administration, or the holder of any lifetime sportsman license authorized under Section 49-7-153 from the requirement of procuring a wild turkey stamp. The bill establishes fees for resident and nonresident hunters, sets penalties for violations, and directs that the revenue from the proceeds of stamps shall be deposited into the Fisheries and Wildlife Fund. It sets forth limited objectives for which the revenue may be used and expended. It authorizes the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks to enter into agreements with other state, federal or nongovernmental entities to execute such objectives.

HB 1637. Effective on passage. Signed 3/18/25.

HB 1637 amends Section 49-7-79 to revise provisions requiring the payment of restitution by persons convicted of unlawfully hunting or fishing on the lands of another. The bill requires a person convicted of unlawfully taking fish from a

private body of water to make restitution to the landowner of the body of water in the amount of \$100 per fish, with no maximum total. A person convicted of unlawfully taking a wild animal or bird from the lands of another is required to pay an assessment of not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 per animal or bird or parts of a wild animal or bird unlawfully taken, subject to an aggregate total of \$2,000. The clerk of the court shall collect and deposit the assessments with the State Treasurer, and the assessments will be deposited in the Fisheries and Wildlife Fund for the purpose of wildlife and sport fish restoration. The Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks may expend the restitution monies upon appropriation by the Legislature.

The restitution required under HB 1637 is in addition to any fines or penalties assessed for the unlawful hunting or fishing on the lands of another.