

Southern District Reports

2013



2013 State Legislative/Regulatory Profile

STATE: Mississippi
CAPITOL CITY: Jackson
GOVERNOR: Phil Bryant (R)
GENERAL ELECTIONS: 1st Tuesday after 1st Monday in November
LEGISLATURE CONVENES: First (1st) Tuesday after first (1st) Monday in January at 12:00 noon
FLOOR PERIODS: 125 days - with new administration and 90 days for next three (3) years

SENATE: 52 Members 33 Standing Committees
REPUBLICANS: 32
DEMOCRATS: 20
TERM: 4 years
PRESIDING OFFICER(S): Tate Reeves (R) (Lt. Governor);
Terry Brown (R)(President Pro-Tem)
MAJOR UTILITY COMMITTEE: Senate Energy Committee (15 members)
Chairman: Terry Burton (R)
Vice-Chairman: Giles Ward (R)
CURRENT ISSUES: Budget, Education, Second Amendment Rights, Medicaid

HOUSE: 122 Members 37 Standing Committees
REPUBLICANS: 65
DEMOCRATS: 57
TERM: 4 years
PRESIDING OFFICER(S): Phillip Gunn (R) (Speaker)
Greg Snowden (R)(Speaker Pro Tem)
MAJOR UTILITY COMMITTEE: House Public Utilities Committee (17) members
Chairman: Jim Beckett (R)
Vice-Chairman: Vacant
CURRENT ISSUES: Budget, Education, Second Amendment Rights, Medicaid

REGULATORY BODY: Public Service Commission

MEMBERS:

Brandon Presley (D); Commissioner, Northern District
Lynn Posey (R); Commissioner, Central District
Leonard Bentz (R); Commissioner, Southern District

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT/ELECTION: Election - 4-year term

CURRENT ISSUES: Kemper County IGCC, Energy Efficiency, Compensation Review

UTILITY:

HB 288: Creating the MS Alternative Fuels Conversion Act *Died in Committee*

HB 894: Mitigating the rate impacts on customers of certain newly constructed electric generating facilities by authorizing the public service commission.

Signed by the Governor

HB 1134: Creating the MS Public Utility Rate Mitigation and Reduction Act.

Signed by the Governor

SB 2322: Removing the authority of the public service commission to regulate rates of utilities when more than one utility operates within a municipality.

Signed by the Governor

TAXES:

HB 1594: Authorizing income tax credit for pollution control equipment mandated by federal law. *Died in Committee*

SB 225: Electric generating facilities purchased on or after January 1, 2012 from the for profit entities by non-profit cooperative electric power associations shall not be exempt from ad valorem taxation. *Died in Committee*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

HB 117: Creating the MS Development Authority Job Training Grant Fund.

Signed by the Governor

HB 844: Exempts certain manufactures, farming, fishing, shrimping, industries from paying sales tax on electricity and fuel required to keep them running.

Signed by the Governor

HB591: Offers a sales tax exemption & income tax credit to companies moving their headquarters to MS and create at least 20 quality jobs. *Signed by the Governor*

REAL ESTATE:

SB 2422: Revising the term excavate or excavation to include routine road or railroad repair activities in the law which regulates excavation near underground utility facilities.

Died in Committee

SAFETY:

HB 230, 272, 707, 708: Prohibition of wireless telephones or electronic communication devices by a person operating a motor vehicle. *All Died in Committee*

EDUCATION:

HB 369: Creating the MS Charter Schools Act of 2013. To define such schools, create a state agency with exclusive jurisdiction, and authorize said board to approve charter schools. *Signed by the Governor*

SB 2347: “Third Grade Reading Bill” requires children to be able to read on a third grade reading level before being promoted to the fourth grade, thus ending social promotion.
Signed by the Governor

SB 2633: “Mississippi Student Religious Liberties Act of 2013” provides protection for children to express their religious views at school.
Signed by the Governor

MEDICAID:

The legislature ended the regular session without reauthorizing Medicaid or appropriating the funds to run the program after July 2013.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS:

HB 1614: Extending sales and ad valorem tax exemptions for certain equipment used in the deployment of broadband technologies. *Died in committee*

SALES AND MARKETING:

HB 287, 297, 793: Authorizing an income tax credit for portions of the cost of new alternate fuel vehicles or alternate fuel conversion equipment, purchase & installation of solar water heaters, electric energy systems. *All died in committee*

HB 1281: Revising energy efficiency standards for commercial buildings.
Signed by the Governor

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS:

HB 485: Exempts names & addresses of people who have concealed carry permits from being a matter of public record. *Signed by the Governor*

HB 1139: Allows hunters to use a weapon of choice for deer hunting on private land after November 30, 2014. *Signed by the Governor*

BUDGET:

General Fund Budget was reached at the amount of \$5.772 billion. This includes \$840 million set aside should the legislature choose to fund the Medicaid program. The rest will fund K-12, Universities, Community & Jr. Colleges, Mental Health, Corrections, Human Services, Military, Police, Veteran’s Affairs, and Public Safety.