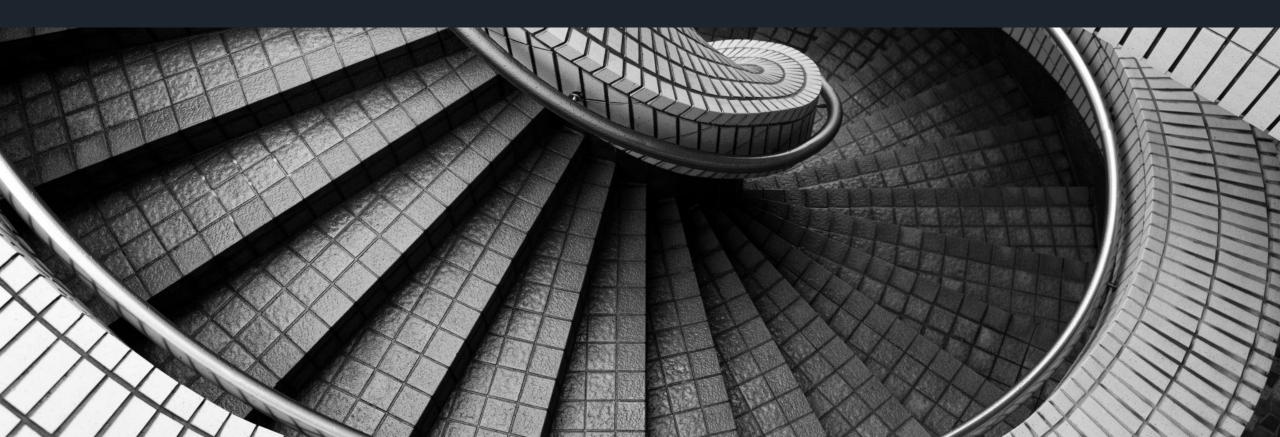
2022 Legislative Recap

Presented By: Steve A. Gray



Order of the Day

- $\rightarrow$  Update on State Revenue Collections
- $\rightarrow$  MAS Proposal Legislative Items
- $\rightarrow$  State Distribution of ARPA Funds
- $\rightarrow$  Other General County Legislation
- $\rightarrow$  Looking Ahead

### Update on State Revenue Collections



### Update on State Revenue Collections

- $\rightarrow$  Legislation Budget Office Monthly Reports: (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter) State FY July 1<sup>st</sup> June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - → Month of March = Month (\$122.5 Million Above) YTD (\$890.9 Million Above)

+106.6

- $\rightarrow$  Month of April = Month (\$229.1 Million Above) YTD (\$1.120.0 Billion Above)
- $\rightarrow$  Month of May = ?????????



+229.1

State Support Funds	FY 2022 (Est w/Deficts	FY 2023 Final Action	FY 2023 Final Action +/(-)	Percent +/(-) FY 2022 Est
General Funds	\$5,818,968,025	\$6,291,920,655	\$472,952,630	8.13%

# MAS Legislative Proposals

## MAS Legislative Proposals

→ Homestead Exemption Reimbursement: (Senate Bill 3024) – This legislation reimburses counties, county districts and municipal separate school districts for tax losses incurred by reason of the exemption of homes from certain ad valorem taxes. (NOTE: Section 7 of this bill provides for the reimbursement of the homestead exemption reimbursement at: \$90.6 million. Last year, this reimbursement was funded at \$79,013,472.00. This year represents an \$11.5 million increase) This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

→ County Supervisors Salary Realignment/Increase: (Senate Bill 2719) – This legislation amends Mississippi Code 25-3-13 and provides (at the board of supervisors' discretion) an initial salary realignment/increase. This legislation also provides for an additional discretionary salary increase of \$2,000.00 for year 2024 and year 2028.

## MAS Legislative Proposals Cont'd

**<u>Rural Fire Truck Funding</u>**: (*House Bill 451*) – This legislation allows money derived from the  $\rightarrow$ non-admitted policy fee collected under Mississippi Code 83-34-4 to be diverted to and deposited annually into the Annual Fire Fund at the amount of \$3,500,000.00. **<u>Rural Fire Truck Acquisition:</u>** (*House Bill 842*) – This legislation authorizes an additional round of fire trucks for counties and municipalities. This legislation also creates a special fund to be designated as the "Rural Fire Truck Matching Assistance Fund." **<u>Fire Rebate Funding</u>**: (*Senate Bill 2335*) – This legislation expands the usage of the Fire Rebate Funds for emergency medical services training and equipment. In addition, it creates a minimum floor of funding for counties in the amount of \$30,000.00

These measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

→ First Responders Health & Safety Act: (House Bill 451) – House Bill 451 also allows money derived from the non-admitted policy fee collected under Mississippi code 83-34-4 to be collected and deposited into the newly created Mississippi First Responders Health and Safety Trust Fund at \$500,000.00.
 This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Government Dollar Distribution



- → <u>Municipal/County Water Infrastructure Grant Program</u>: (*Senate Bill 2822*) This act establishes the "Mississippi Municipality and County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program Act of 2022" administered by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) utilizing Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds made available under the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This measure also provides that such grants shall be made available to municipalities, counties and certain utilities on a one-to-one matching basis, and it provides an additional grant to smaller municipalities based on coronavirus local fiscal recovery funds; This measure also prescribes eligible projects under the grant program and authorizes multiple rounds of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure grant projects. This measure authorizes the Department of Environmental Quality to promulgate the grant application regulations and engineering assistance.
- → MCWI Grant Program Appropriation: (Senate Bill 3056) This act appropriates from the State Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund to the Department of Environmental Quality in an amount of \$450,000,000.00 for the Municipal/County Water Infrastructure Grant Program.

This measure takes effect upon passage.

 $\rightarrow \mathbf{Rural Water Association Infrastructure Grant Program}: (House Bill 1421) - This act provides that the State Department of Health shall establish a grant program to be known as the ARPA Rural Water Associations Infrastructure Grant Program to assist Rural Water Associations in the construction of eligible drinking water infrastructure projects under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This program shall be funded from appropriations from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund. This program will provide that upon the approval of an application for a grant under the program, the department shall enter into a project grant agreement with each grantee to establish the terms of the grant for the project, including the amount of the$ 

grant. This measure takes effect upon passage.

- Final State Health Board approval after public comment June 15<sup>th</sup>
- Will include "in-kind" match option, this will also strengthen the chances of an application submitted
- → **Rural Water Association Infrastructure Grant Program Appropriation**: (*House Bill 1538*) This act appropriates from the State Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund to the State Department of Health for funding the ARPA Rural Water Association Infrastructure in an amount of \$300,000,000.00.

#### This measure takes effect upon passage.

→ Tourism Marketing Recovery Funds: (House Bill 453) - This act requires the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) to establish a program for the purpose of providing funds to Destination Marketing Organizations to assist in paying costs of certain marketing activities. This act also to defines the terms "destination marketing organizations" and "marketing activities" for the purposes of this act. The funds in this act are also eligible for repairs and renovations of and upgrades and improvements to museums for health and safety purposes related to the coronavirus disease. This act requires the Department of Finance and Administration to establish a program for the purpose of providing funds to Mississippi Main Street Association to be used for the purpose of making revitalization grants to Mississippi communities. This grant program authorizes funding totaling \$30,000,000.00.

Portal to apply for funds will be available after July 1<sup>st</sup> (DFA's Website) Those that are awarded should expect to see the funds late summer early fall

- → Law Enforcement / Fire Fighters Death Benefit Trust Fund: (*House Bill 779*) This act amends Mississippi code 45-2-1 and provides that the definition of cause of death for the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Death Benefits Trust Fund includes any cause of death that would be covered under the Safeguarding America's First Responders Act of 2020. This act provides for the transfer of funds from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund to the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Death Benefits Trust Fund. This is funded at the \$5,000,000.00 threshold. This measure takes effect upon passage.
- → Premium Pay for Law Enforcement / Firefighters: (House Bill 1427) This act creates the "Mississippi Law Enforcement and Fire Fighters Premium Pay Program" to be administered by the Department of Public Safety for the purpose of providing funds to law enforcement officers and fire fighters as premium pay for their efforts during the covid-19 pandemic. (NOTE: Section 2, sub-section (d) of this act reimburses counties, municipalities, and other governmental entities that before the effective date of this act, paid premium pay to law enforcement officers and fire fighters employed by them from the funds received under the Federal American Rescue Plan Act.)

This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

→ Broadband Deployment: (House Bill 1029) - This act creates the Broadband Expansion and Accessibility of Mississippi (BEAM) Act within the Department of Finance and Administration. This act also designates the Office as the State Broadband Office to review applications for funding broadband infrastructure projects using federal and state funds. This newly created office shall consider certain factors in making its determinations and awards. This newly created office will also be required to establish and publish on its website its criteria for competitively scoring applications and require an applicant to provide certain information at a minimum on their application.

This measure takes effect upon passage.

## Other General County Legislative Items

# Infrastructure Roads/Bridges

#### INFRASTRUCTURE ROADS AND BRIDGES

→ Emergency Road & Bridge Repair Fund (ERBR): (Senate Bill 2780) - Section 1 of this act provides for the 2022 Emergency Road and Bridge Fund (ERBR) as special funds in the state treasury to be administered by the MS Department of Transportation for various purposes. This legislation is funded at \$100,000,000.00.

This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

- → <u>2022 Local Improvements Project Fund:</u> (House Bill 1353) Section 25 of this act is designated the "2022 Local Improvements Projects Fund." The fund shall be maintained by the State Treasurer as a separate and special fund, separate and apart from the General Fund of the state. (NOTE: There are numerous specific projects in this fund that address specific municipalities and specific counties. The projects in this fund total \$222,290,300.00 (Additional NOTE: This bill was partially Vetoed). The initial passage of this legislation funded the total projects at around \$222 million.
- Designs of Bridges and Culverts: (House Bill 1073) This act amends Section 65-21-1, Mississippi code of 1972, and revises the provisions of law that prescribes the design of bridges and culverts on public roads. (NOTE: All bridges built after the passage of this law shall be built or rebuilt with either railings or barriers, and appropriate hazard marking signs.)

#### This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE ROADS AND BRIDGES

→ MDOT and Counties Contracting for County Maintenance Work: (House Bill 1185) - This act authorizes the board of supervisors of any county to contract with the Mississippi Transportation Commission to perform maintenance on the state highways and interstate highways in that county and any rights-of-way to such highways. This measure takes effect upon passage.

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#### PURCHASING LAWS

Additional Reverse Auction Mandate Exclusions: (Senate Bill 2806) – This act amends Section 31-7-13, Mississippi code of 1972, to clarify under the public purchasing law that reverse auction shall not be used for the improvement, repair or remodeling of any public facilities, including the purchase of materials, supplies, <u>equipment</u> or goods for same and including buildings, roads and bridges, and term contracts as provided in paragraph (n) of this legislation. This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

→ Threshold Increase for Bid Requirements: (House Bill 2371) - This act amends Section 31-7-13 of Mississippi code of 1972 and increases the threshold for bid requirement under the public purchasing law from \$50,000.00 to \$75,000.00 in which bids may be made from the lowest and best bidder without publishing or posting advertisement for bids, provided at least two (2) competitive bids have been obtained.

This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

# County Salaries



#### COUNTY SALARIES

- Salaries of Riding Bailiffs: (House Bill 400) This act amends Section 19-25-31, Mississippi code of 1972, and authorizes the increase of the salary of riding bailiffs. The county has the discretion to pay "BETWEEN" \$55.00 and \$100.00.
- → Increase Compensation for Certain County Officials: (House Bill 719) This act amends various Mississippi code sections for salary increases for the following county officials: Chancery Clerks, Circuit Clerks, Tax Assessors/Collectors, Constables, and Medical Examiners.
  This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.
- → Salaries of Sheriffs & Election Commissioners: (House Bill 1408) This act amend Section 25-3-25, Mississippi code of 1972, and increases the annual salaries of the county sheriffs. This act also authorizes the board of supervisors of any county in which a juvenile detention center is located to pay an annual supplement to the sheriff of the county. This act amends section 23-15-153, Mississippi code of 1972, and increases the amount of per diem for county election commissioners. This measure takes effect from and after October 1, 2022
- Salary Realignment/Increase Board of Supervisors: (Senate Bill 2719) This act amends Section 25 3-13, Mississippi code of 1972, to increase the annual salary of members of the boards of supervisors. In addition, this act provides additional increase for year 2024 and year 2028 This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

# **Potential** Health Benefits

#### POTENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS

→ Cash In-Lieu: (House Bill 843) - This act amends Section 25-15-103 of Mississippi code of 1972 and authorizes counties and municipalities to offer supplemental compensation to employees who decline coverage under their group insurance. (NOTE: MAS will work to utilize this legislation to establish a program that could possibly save money regarding their healthcare costs.)

#### This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

→ Local Discretion for Fire Fighter Benefits: (Senate Bill 2357) - This act allows counties to pay the reasonable hospital and medical expenses for paid or volunteer fire department members suffering injury or illness incurred in the line of duty; This act also allows counties to provide accident, death or disability policies to paid or volunteer fire department members. This act allows counties to purchase insurance coverage for the medical costs and expenses incurred in the line of duty of paid or volunteer fire department members. This act allows municipalities to pay the premiums for accident, death and disability policies and insurance coverage for the medical costs and expenses incurred in the line of 1972, and allows municipalities to pay the premiums for accident, death and disability policies and insurance coverage for the medical costs and expenses incurred in the line of duty of paid or volunteer fire department in the line of duty of paid and expenses incurred in the line of duty for paid or volunteer fire department members. This act also amends Section 21-25-9, Mississippi code of 1972, and allows municipalities to pay the premiums for accident, death and disability policies and insurance coverage for the medical costs and expenses incurred in the line of duty for paid or volunteer fire department members.

### Prohibition/Limitations

PROHIBITION/LIMITATIONS

- → Prohibition of Soliciting Private Funds Regarding Election Outreach/Education: (House Bill 1365) This act prohibits any agency or state or local official from soliciting, accepting or otherwise using private funds for any election-related expenses or voter education, voter outreach or voter registration programs.
  This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.
- → Limitation of Charging of Fees Regarding Fire Protection Districts: (House Bill 1098) This act amends Section 19-5-177, Mississippi code of 1972, and prohibits the board of commissioners of certain fire protection districts from imposing fees if the board of supervisors of a county has levied a special tax for a fire protection district.
  This measure takes effect from and after huly 1, 2022



#### CREATIVE/INNOVATIVE

→ Authorizing Two or More Counties to Use a Justice Court Clerk: (House Bill 1017) - This act amends Section 9-11-27, Mississippi code of 1972, and authorizes two or more counties to appoint one person to serve as clerk of the justice court system for the counties. This act provides that such clerk shall be paid an amount mutually agreed upon and adopted by resolution of the respective boards of supervisors. This act provides that such counties may also jointly appoint other employees of the justice court system.

→ County/Municipal Leasing of Facilities to be used as a Fire Station: (House Bill 1098) - This act amends Section 31-8-3, Mississippi code of 1972, and authorizes the board of supervisors of any county and the governing authorities of any municipality to enter into lease agreements for facilities that will be utilized as fire stations for terms that are not to exceed twenty years.

This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

Major Leadership Agenda Item

#### MAJOR LEADERSHIP AGENDA ITEM

 $\rightarrow \frac{\text{Creation of the Mississippi Tax Freedom Act}}{\text{Of } 2022. \text{This act amends Section } 27-7-5, \text{Mississippi code of } 1972, \text{ and reduces the state income tax on the taxable income of individuals. This act provides that it is the intent of the Legislature that before calendar year 2026, the Legislature will consider whether the revised income tax rates provided for in this act will be further decreased for calendar years after calendar year 2026. This act provides that if the revised tax rates are further decreased for calendar years after calendar year 2026 to the extent that there is no tax levied on the taxable income individuals under this section, and the individual income tax shall stand repealed.$ 

This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

## Future Challenges

Looking Ahead

- $\rightarrow$  Maintaining FULL funding levels of the Homestead Exemption Reimbursement
- $\rightarrow$  Possibility of expanding more flexibility with purchasing laws
- $\rightarrow$  Adequate Emergency 911 Funding
- $\rightarrow$  Continue to advocate for more revenue to distribute regarding ERBR funding
- → Address House Bill 1163 from the 2022 Regular Legislative Session (Mandated Permitting for Contractors) (NOTE: MAS is working on a way to make this an effortless process, so counties won't have to spend any money.) This measure takes effect from and after July 1, 2022.

