



2020 Regular Legislative Recap &  
**COVID-19** Impact on the State  
and Federal Process

STEVE A. GRAY

# Order of Discussion

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## **Post Mid-Winter 2020 – Pre-COVID-19 Pause**

(The MAS Agenda & Revenue Projections, Bills Introduced & Moving, MAS Communications)

## **The Official COVID-19 Legislative Pause**

(Status of MAS Measures, Federal/State Communication Strategy, Preliminary Work on Recovery Funds)

## **Recalibrating the Path Forward**

(Prioritization of COVID-19 Bills, Final Outcome: MAS/Proposals Issues, Future Legislation )

# Post Mid-Winter / Pre COVID-19 Pause

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OPTIMISTIC START

# The MAS Agenda

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## Core Proposals

- \* LSBP “GAP” Funding
- \* Full Homestead Exemption Reimbursement
- \* Adequate E-911 Funding
- \* Discretionary Salary Authority
- \* Rural Fire Truck Funding
- \* Beaver Control Assistance Program (BCAP)
- \* Purchasing Law (Increase from \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 not requiring P.O., Requisition, Receiving Report)

# The MAS Agenda

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## Issue Items

- \* Inmate Cost Containment Program: Repealer Extender: *MS Code 47-5-901 thru 47-5-909*
- \* First Responders Health & Safety Act of 2019
- \* Long-term Funding of the Rural Fire Truck Program
- \* Reverse Auction

# Budget Projection/ Available Funds

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## Prior to the Start of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session

\* Adopted by the Governor and Joint Legislative Budget Committee

- - Fiscal Year 2021 State Support Budget: \$6,270,033,886.00

\*Unallocated Funds

- - \$1,290,900,000.00

# Bills Introduced & Moving

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## Measures Introduced or Initially Passed Out of Committees/Chambers

### **First Responders/Rural Fire Truck**

House Bill 982

### **County Purchasing**

House Bill 494

### **“Gap” Funding for the LSBP Program**

House Bill 379

### **Rural Fire Truck Acquaintance**

House Bill 721

### **Compliance with Local Ordinances**

House Bill 353

### **Section-42 Housing (*Open Code Section*)**

House Bill 1227

### **E-911 Overhaul**

Senate Bill 2746

### **Reverse Auction**

House Bill 407 & Senate Bill 2215

### **Inmate Medical Costs**

House Bill 685 & Senate Bill 2279

### **Supervisor’s Salary**

House Bill 1397; House Bill 1432; Senate Bill 2632

### **Maintain Electric Format of Law Books**

House Bill 493

# MAS Communications

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## Diversified Methodologies Utilized

- \* Electronic Delivery of Weekly Legislative Updates
- \* Regional Planning and Development District Capitol Visits
- \* Emergency Phone Text Notifications/Alerts
- \* Podcast Trial (*Stealth Mode*) FYI



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### EPISODES



2020 Regular Legislative Session (Post COVID-19 Leg. Recess Week 6)

This Week's Episode Highlights the "Unofficial" end of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session, A Successful Effort to Delay the Implementation of the First Responders Health and Safety Act

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2020 Regular Legislative Session (Post COVID-19 Leg. Recess Week 5)

This week's Episode Highlights the Mississippi County and Municipality Emergency Relief Program, The Mississippi Back to Business Liability Assurance Act. a CALL-TO-ACTION

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2020 Regular Legislative Session (Post COVID-19 Leg. Recess Week 4)

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# The Official COVID-19 Legislative Pause

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REMAINING STEADFAST

# Status of Advocated Measures

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## “Official” Half-Way Point of the 2020 Regular Session

- \* “Gap” funding for the Local Systems Bridge Program (Passed House Chamber)
- \* Extending the Repealer regarding Inmate Medical Costs (Passed House/Senate Chamber)
- \* First Responders Health and Safety Act / Rural Fire Truck (Passed House Chamber)
- \* Purchasing Law: Raising threshold from \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 (Passed House Chamber)
- \* E-911 Overhaul Measure (Passed Senate Chamber)
- \* Reverse Auction (Passed House/Senate Chamber)

# Federal/State Communication Strategy

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## MS Legislature Recesses While Congress Addresses COVID-19

\*MAS Lobbying Team:

- **National Association of Counties:** Weekly Conference Calls & Data Mining
- **Trump Administration White House:** Weekly Conference Calls
- **Mississippi's Congressional Delegation:** Letter Writing Campaign
- **Governor Tate Reeves:** Exclusive Statewide Conference Calls with the MAS Membership

# Federal/State Communication Strategy

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## Federal Legislative Action Passed By Congress

[H.R. 6074: Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020](#) — Enacted March 4, 2020. Provided \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak related to developing a vaccine, medical supplies, grants for public health agencies, small business loans, and assistance for health systems in other countries. Allowed for temporarily waiving Medicare restrictions and requirements regarding telehealth services.

[H.R. 6201: Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) — Enacted March 18, 2020. Guaranteed free coronavirus testing, established paid leave, enhanced unemployment insurance, expanded food security initiatives, and increased federal Medicaid funding.

# Federal/State Communication Strategy

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## Federal Legislative Action Passed By Congress (Cont'd)

[H.R. 748: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act](#) — Enacted March 27, 2020. A \$2 Trillion coronavirus relief bill, which will send \$1,200 to each American making \$75,000 a year or less, add \$600/week to unemployment benefits for four months, give \$100 billion to hospitals and health providers, make \$500 billion of loans or investments to businesses, states and municipalities, and \$32 billion in grants to the airline industry, and more. [Also created the \\*\\*\\*Coronavirus Relief Fund for State and Local Governments\\*\\*\\*](#) - **\$150 Billion for State, Local, & Tribal Government.**

[H.R. 266: Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act](#) – Enacted April 24, 2020. Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, also known as the “COVID-19 3.5” relief package. This \$484 Billion package is the second largest of the four coronavirus response bills Congress has passed so far. (Additional \$310 Billion in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). \$10 Billion for Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Grants; \$50 Billion Disaster Loan Program; \$75 Billion for reimbursement to hospitals and healthcare; \$25 Billion for research and testing.)

# Federal/State Communication Strategy

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## Federal Legislative Being Considered

**H.R. 6800: The Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act** — Passed by the United States Congressional House Chamber on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2020. \$3 trillion, 1,815-page bill with numerous provisions for counties. Most important, this measure would provide \$187.5 billion in direct relief to counties of all sizes through the Coronavirus Relief Fund, and it would address lost revenue. Counties would receive \$125 billion within 30 days of the bill's enactment and \$62.5 billion in year two.

**S. 3752: The State Municipal Assistance for Response and Transition (SMART) Act** – This measure has not yet been passed by the U.S. Senate. It would provide \$500 billion for state, local, and tribal governments and would allow the money to cover lost revenue. In addition, except for tribal government, all of the funds would go to the state, and one-third of the state revenue would be required to distribute to local government through an established formula. Half would go to counties and the other half to municipalities. NOTE: This was introduced as a Bi-Partisan measure. (*Sen. Bob Menendez D-NJ*) & (*Bill Cassidy R-LA*)

# Federal/State Communication Strategy

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## Federal Legislative Being Considered

S.?????: The Health and Economic Assistance Liability Protection and Schools (HEALS) Act — Unveiled on Monday July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This \$1 Trillion Senate measure is what the Senate leadership is “officially” pushing forward. This act addresses The American Workers, Families, & Employers Assistance Act; Employee Safeguard to Offer for Work Opportunities; Small Business Recovery & PPP; Labor & Human Services, Education & Related Agencies; School Related Issues; Supplemental Appropriation for Coronavirus Response; and etc.

- Regarding State & Local Government:

- “No” additional revenue allocation beyond what has already been administered through the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)
- There is flexibility to utilize CRF funds beyond the December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 deadline
- This act would make “lost revenue” available for the current CRF funds, but only 25% would be eligible
- Healthcare: \$16 Billion for testing; \$25 Billion for hospital/provider fund; \$15 Billion Child Care;
- Investments in the 2020 Census and workforce training counties could utilize



# Preliminary Work on Federal Funds

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## Preplanning with the State Legislative Leadership

\*MAS staff along with state leaders analyzes the CARES Act and recognizes Mississippi will receive the minimum \$1.25 billion in the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)

\*MAS staff receive phone calls from the state leadership on teaming up to establish a reimbursement program for counties by way of the federal CARES Act money.

\*MAS staff begin surveying counties regarding expenses and the type of expenses counties were expending.

# Recalibrating the Path Forward

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EXECUTING THE NEW STRATEGY

# Prioritization of COVID-19 Bills

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## COVID Related Assistance to Local Government a Priority

### House Chamber

Principal Author: Rep. Larry Byrd (County Affairs Chairman)

#### **House Bill 1781**

Coronavirus Local Government Reimbursement Program

#### **House Bill 1799**

Mississippi County & Municipality Emergency Relief Program; Appropriation

Principal Author: Rep. John Read (Appropriations Chairman)

#### **House Bill 1750**

Appropriation; DFA for COVID-19 expenses incurred by municipalities and counties for FY20 & FY21

### Senate Chamber

Principal Author: Sen. Angela Hill (County Affairs Chairman)

#### **Senate Bill 3047**

Mississippi County and Municipality Emergency Relief Program

Principal Author: Sen. Briggs Hopson (Appropriations Chairman)

#### **Senate Bill 3012**

Appropriation; DFA for COVID-19 expenses incurred by municipalities and counties for FY20 & FY21

# Prioritization of COVID-19 Bills

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## Recipients of CARES Act Funds Issued by the Legislature

**Small Business Grant Program:** \$300 Million

**Unemployment Trust Fund:** \$181.8 Million

**K-12 Distance Learning:** \$150 Million

**Health care:** \$129.7 Million

**Broadband:** \$75 Million

**Counties and Municipalities:** \$70 Million

**Workforce Development:** \$55 Million

**Governor's Discretionary Fund:** \$50 Million

**K-12 Internet Connectivity:** \$50 Million

**Universities:** \$50 Million

**Community Colleges:** \$50 Million

**MS Emergency Management Agency:** \$40 Million

**Corrections:** \$20 Million

**Tourism:** \$15 Million

**Private Schools & Colleges:** \$10 Million

**Courts and Judiciary:** \$2.8 Million

**Elections:** \$1 Million

# Final Outcome: MAS Proposals/Issues

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## The Totality of Top Priority Legislation for MAS

### House Bill 379

Local Systems Bridge Program “GAP” Funding

### House Bill 494

County Purchasing: Increase from \$1,500.00 to \$2,500.00

### House Bill 685 & Senate Bill 2279

Inmate Medical Costs (*Repealer Extension*)

### Senate Bill 2944

Homestead Exemption Reimbursement (*Reduction of Initial Cut*)

### Senate Bill 2963

Beaver Control Assistance (BCAP) Program

### Senate Bill 3052

Postponing the Mandated Implementation of The First Responders Health & Safety Act

### House Bill 1799

Mississippi County & Municipality Emergency Relief Program; Appropriation

### Senate Bill 3047

Mississippi County and Municipality Emergency Relief Program

### House Bill 1750

COVID-19 Placeholder for Potential Additional Federal Funds

### Senate Bill 3012

COVID-19 Placeholder for Potential Additional Federal Funds

# Future Legislation

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## Key MAS Legislative Issues That Still Need Addressing

### **Funding for the First Responders Health & Safety Act**

House Bill 982 was introduced to address this issue

### **Consistent Rural Fire Truck Funding**

House Bill 982 and House Bill 721 was introduced to address this issue

### **Adequate E-911 Funding**

Senate Bill 2746 was introduced to address this issue.

### **Reverse Auction**

House Bill 407 and Senate Bill 2215 was introduced to address this issue

### **FULL Reimbursement of the Homestead Exemption**

Senate Bill 2944 was introduced to address this issue

Questions?

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