

MAS' WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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The 2022 Regular Legislative Session

The Third week of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session is complete. The deadline for introduction of general bills and constitutional amendments has passed. The deadline for committees to report general bills and constitutional amendments originating in own house is Tuesday, February 1st.

Second County Supervisors Salary Alignment Measure Introduced in the Senate Chamber (Senate Bill 2719)

Senate Bill 2719 provides authorization for Mississippi county boards of supervisors to accept an initial salary increase due to a salary schedule realignment. In addition to the salary schedule realignment, in year 2024, a county board of supervisors will have the option to authorize themselves a \$2,000.00 salary increase, and in year 2028, a county board of supervisors will have the option to authorize themselves an additional \$2,000.00 pay increase. This measure is single referred to the Economic Development and Workforce Committee.

NOTE: No action is currently taken on this measure.

MS House of Representatives Amends and Passes the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act (Senate Bill 2095)

On Wednesday, January 19th, the Mississippi House of Representatives passed the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act **by a vote of 105 to 14**. The House amended version of this measure offers three (3) significant changes from the Senate's version. First, the House version reduces the amount of marijuana an individual could get per month from 3.5 grams to 3 grams. Second, the House version removed the MS Department of Agriculture from any involvement in the process. Final, the House version allow cultivators and processors of medical marijuana can be located. Basically, cultivators and processors were given allowance in commercially zoned areas.

NOTE: This measure will now head back to the Senate for Concurrence or Non-Concurrence.

House Accountability, Efficiency, & Transparency Committee
(AET) Passes Local Government Transparency Measure
(House Bill 599)

On Thursday, January 20th, the House AET Committee passed out **House Bill 599**. This measure added counties and cities to the MS Accountability and Transparency Act. By July 1, 2023, counties with a population threshold of 20k or more shall create and maintain an accountability and transparency website for the county or setup up a separate section on a county's existing website. The website shall provide financial reports, audits, budgets, and other financial documents of the county. Website address must simple and unique. Website must have links or features that will assist the public in obtaining and reviewing public financial information. Section 3 of this measure mandates that any insurance plan paid for by the taxpayers, in an amount of \$150k or more that is used to pay settlements for sexual harassment claims shall be listed on the website. **NOTE:** This measure currently resides on the House Floor Calendar.

Senate Insurance Committee Passes Optional Firefighters
Benefits Measure (Senate Bill 2357)

On Thursday, January 20th, the Senate Insurance Committee passed **Senate Bill 2357** which gives counties the discretion to pay out of the county general fund for reasonable hospital and medical expenses for paid or volunteer fire department members suffering injury or illness incurred in the line of duty. This measure also allows for payment of accident, death, or disability policies for paid or volunteer firefighters. Lastly, this measure 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. **NOTE:** If a county chooses to pay hospital and medical expenses from the county general fund, the board of supervisors of such county "SHALL" be the sole judge as to whether such illness or such injury was contracted or sustained in the line of duty of any such employee. **NOTE:** This measure currently resides on the Senate Floor Calendar.

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