NOTICE REGARDING REGIONAL CAPTIOL VISITS

Due to the recommendations from the House & Senate leadership along with the State Health Officer regarding the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Mississippi State Capitol has adopted a strict policy to limit visitors to the State Capitol. With that being stated, the Regional Capitol Visit for the Northeast Planning and Development District and the South Delta Planning and Development District will be canceled. We will update the remaining Planning and Development Districts on how MAS will proceed with their upcoming Regional Capitol Visit. As an alternative, MAS will host a conference call for each regional district on their visitation day at 10:30am to deliver a legislative briefing and hold elections for the Board of Directors, Legislative and Nominating Committee. The Northeast PDD regional conference call will be Tuesday, March 17th at 10:30am, and the South Delta PDD regional conference call will be Wednesday, March 18th at 10:30am. MAS will send out the conference call call-in number and passcode to the supervisors representing those districts.

NOTE: For Supervisors that would still like to come down and visit with MAS staff at the MAS office, please feel free to stop by the office for working lunch.

SENATE CHAMBER PASSES E-911 OVERHAUL LEGISLATION

On Thursday, March 12, 2020, the Senate chamber voted to pass Senate Bill 2746 by a vote of 49 to 1. Senate Bill 2746 creates an additional $1.00 fee increase on wireless telecom devices (Pre-paid & Post-paid), and Voice Over Internet Protocol, bringing the surcharge to $2.00. This measure also creates a governmental authority that will reside under the MS Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) that will govern “ALL” surcharge revenue that will be distributed to the counties. There is a Board of Governance that will govern this new authority and will consist of a 13-member board that will consist of members representing local government except for 4 of the members. It is very important for Board of Supervisors to meet with their 911 Directors and Legal Counsel to discuss this measure with their local legislative delegation.

NOTE: This measure has passed the Senate chamber and will now head to the House chamber for consideration.

REVERSE AUCTION BILLS PASS BOTH CHAMBERS

On Wednesday, March 11th, the House Chamber passed House Bill 407 by a vote of 109 to 7. This measure gives counties the discretion to decide if reverse auction is in their best interest or not. On Thursday, March 12th, the Senate Chamber passed Senate Bill 2215 by a vote of 52 to 0. This measure only exempts “Term Contract,” and “E-Rate Contracts” from the reverse auction process.

NOTE: Both measures will now be transmitted to opposite chambers for consideration.

FIRST RESPONDER HEATH AND SAFETY ACT AND RURAL FIRE TRUCK FUNDING PASSES HOUSE CHAMBER

On Wednesday, March 11th, the House Chamber passed House Bill 982 by a vote of 94 to 27. This measure provides funding for the mandated defined benefit cancer policy for first responders and it provides a residual funding stream for the rural fire truck program.

NOTE: This measure will now head to the Senate Chamber for consideration.

INMATE MEDICAL COST (REPEALER) BILLS PASS BOTH CHAMBERS

House bill 685 and Senate Bill 2279 extend the repealer on current law that mandates counties not to being liable for any cost that exceed the Medicaid reimbursement rate for convicted prisoners and pretrial detainees. The House version passed by a vote of 117 to 0 and the Senate version passed by a vote of 50 to 0.

NOTE: Both measures will now be transmitted to opposite chambers for consideration.