



Mississippi House of Representatives Special Session Summary

May 8, Tornado Disaster Relief Special Session

On Tuesday, May 6, Governor Phil Bryant called a special session of the Legislature for Thursday, May 8. This is the second extraordinary session called by Governor Bryant in 2014. This special session was devoted to appropriating additional funds to Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to assist with disaster relief efforts prompted by the massive storm outbreak on Monday, April 28.

The Legislature ended the 2014 Regular Session setting aside \$4.5 million for MEMA in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, which allotted approximately \$894,000 less than FY2014 funds designated for disaster relief specifically. After the devastation that occurred on April 28, President Obama issued proclamations declaring 12 Mississippi counties as disaster areas. While federal dollars cover up to 75 percent of damages during emergency declarations, state and local governments are responsible to cover the remaining 25 percent, 12.5 percent each.

Upon gaveling in at 1 p.m., the House recessed subject to call as members waited to receive the Senate Bill 2001 (SB2001). House Appropriations Chairman Herb Frierson then called a meeting of the Appropriations Committee where members met to discuss the bill, quickly passing it to the House floor. Enactment of this measure would transfer \$17 million from the Motor Vehicle Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund to the Disaster Assistance Trust Fund. As a result, the state will pay the local governments' match requirement for debris removal.

House members unanimously passed the bill, with the Governor signing it into law later in the day.

This concluded the second extraordinary special session of 2014.