



Mississippi House of Representatives Weekly Summary

Week of February 23, 2015

This week, House members faced Wednesday's deadline for original floor action on Appropriation and Revenue bills originating in the House, and Thursday's deadline of reconsideration on Appropriation and Revenue bills originating in the House. House members also began addressing Senate bills toward the end of the week.

Several bills authorizing bonds and tax credits to different groups passed from the Ways and Means Committee this week onto the House calendar.

--[House bill 1570](#) (HB1570) provides \$1 million to the City of Gulfport for a new aquarium. The city is spending \$150 million on this project. The bill passed by a vote of 110-8.

--[House bill 1618](#) (HB1618) creates the Main Street Investment Act, which provides \$5 million in bonds for municipalities with populations of less than 15,000 to be used toward revitalizing downtown areas. Revenues gained would be used to pay back the loan. The bill passed by a vote of 118-2.

--[House bill 1568](#) (HB1568) gives the Elvis Presley Birthplace, Museum and Chapel \$1 million in bonds to complete this project that began in 1994. A portion of the money will be used toward the Vietnam Memorial that is adjacent to the Elvis Presley birthplace.

--[House bill 1134](#) (HB1134) approves the establishment of Catastrophe Savings Accounts and exempts contributions and distributions to them from income tax. Enactment of this measure will help homeowners afford increasing insurance premiums as a result of additional risks. Through these savings accounts, homeowners will be allowed to have higher deductibles on their policies. This will only be allowed in catastrophic instances. It passed by a vote of 121-0.

In 2012, Governor Bryant signed into law the "Mississippi Health Care Industry Zone Act," which provides certain tax incentives for qualified health care industry related businesses located within five miles of hospitals within health care zones. The law gives the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) permission to designate areas in counties as Health Care Industry Zones if they meet certain criteria. Special incentives encourage health-related businesses to locate in or relocate to these areas.

On the House floor this week, members passed [House bill 1634](#) (HB1634), complimenting that law. This law mirrors HB1582 which passed last year in the House. HB1634, or the "Mississippi Healthcare Industry Zone Master Plan," will provide incentives for certain healthcare facilities within healthcare zone master plan communities. MDA will be provided a small amount of bonding capacity to assist with specific projects in communities that have healthcare zone master plans. A special diversion of \$50,000 a month would be set aside for a healthcare job training fund to be administered by MDA. The training will be provided by universities and community colleges. No state General Fund dollars will be



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used. Local sources will issue and pay for the bonds. Twelve communities currently have Healthcare Industry Zone Master Plans. They are located in the counties of: Clarke, Clay, Copiah, Hancock, Humphreys, Madison, Marshall, Montgomery, Noxubee, Panola, Scott and Yazoo.

On Wednesday, deadline day, the House passed a \$1.5 billion individual income tax cut proposal by a bipartisan vote of 83-32. The income tax cut in [House Bill 1629](#) (HB1629) will occur over a 15-year period beginning in Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) and will take place only if there is three percent revenue growth in each fiscal year.

Currently, Mississippians pay a three percent income tax on their first \$5,000 of income, four percent on the next \$5,000 of income and five percent on income over \$10,000. Under the House plan, the three percent income tax would be eliminated by 2019, the four percent income tax by 2022 and the five percent income tax by 2030.

Key Points of the Proposal:

- 15 Year - \$1,515,920,217 individual income tax elimination
- 3% bracket eliminated by 2019
- 4% bracket eliminated by 2022
- 5% bracket eliminated by 2030
- 3% revenue growth required
- Mississippi family that makes \$30,000 a year - \$1,350 Raise
- Mississippi family that makes \$50,000 a year - \$2,350 Raise
- Mississippi family that makes \$70,000 a year - \$3,350 Raise

The Insurance Committee addressed and passed several Senate bills including [Senate bill 2380](#) (SB2380), which allows drivers to keep their insurance card on electronic devices as opposed to keeping it solely on a card when providing proof of insurance. The bill was amended to include provisions prohibiting an officer/trooper from going through a person's phone or computer for anything other than the insurance information.

Among the bills passed by the Education Committee, [Senate bill 2161](#) (SB2161) creates a 19-member commission to study the Common Core National Education Standards. Fifteen members of the commission will be experienced educators in the four subject areas (Math, English Language Arts, History and Science). The remaining four members will include the chairmen of the House and Senate Education Committees and the chairman of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.