



Week of January 29, 2018

Committee meetings to discuss House bills wrapped up on Tuesday, and the House convened as a whole Wednesday through Friday to discuss the legislation that made it to the calendar. Bills considered dealt with a variety of topics on different subjects.

[House Bill 192](#) would make it lawful to transport unopened beer and light wine on state and federal highways in dry areas of the state. This bill passed by a vote of 91-19. Similarly, [House Bill 840](#) would give maritime retailers operating in the Mississippi Sound or on the Mississippi River the ability to obtain a permit to sell alcohol. This bill passed by a vote of 83-29.

A tax credit would be offered to taxpayers who employ persons convicted of certain non-violent crimes by [House Bill 175](#), which passed by a vote of 110-5.

The House voted unanimously to pass [House Bill 826](#), which outlines criminal penalties for the embezzlement or misapplication of perpetual care trust funds. These trusts are established so that earnings may be used for the repair and overall maintenance of public cemeteries. Another unanimous vote occurred on [House Bill 1028](#), known as "Nancy's Law." This bill would allow the Department of Human Services to relocate an individual or provide a new caretaker when investigations reveal abuse of a vulnerable person.

The House Committee on Public Health and Human Services introduced [House Bill 709](#). This bill would create the Prescription Drugs Consumer Affordable Alternative Payment Options Act, which allows pharmacists to provide additional information to patients detailing options for medication that might be more affordable. The bill passed by a vote of 118-1.

County government would receive more power under [House Bill 164](#), which would allow the president of a county board of supervisors to issue a proclamation declaring a local emergency. This measure passed by a unanimous vote of 118-0.

On Friday, the House voted to expand the Mississippi Virtual School Program with the passage of [House Bill 1037](#), which creates an online application process for course providers in an effort to provide students in the program with a wider range of classes.

The House also passed [House Bill 1510](#), sparking debate among members. This bill would prohibit abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy. Supporters of the bill say it would protect both the lives of unborn children and their mothers. Those opposed argued that this seemed unconstitutional and that the state should not be making decisions about women's health. The measure passed by a vote of 79-31.

A number of noncontroversial bills also passed through the House this week, including a bill creating the Mississippi Travel and Tourism Council, a bill adding veterans diagnosed with PTSD to the list of persons who may use support animals and a bill designating a section of Highway 49 as “MS World War II Veterans Memorial Highway.”

In the coming weeks, the House will continue to meet as a whole to vote on bills that will be sent to the Senate for consideration. Visitors to the Capitol are welcome to come watch the proceedings from the gallery. Capitol visitors this week included members of the Mississippi Psychological Association, the Mississippi Economic Development Council, the Mississippi Association of Realtors and the Mississippi Association for Justice.