



Week of January 21, 2019

Legislators had a full schedule during the third week of the 2019 Legislative Session. The deadline for introducing bills was on Monday night, so the calendar quickly became full with bills and resolutions to discuss. Although most work is still happening in committees, several pieces of legislation reached the House floor.

On Tuesday, [House Bill 571](#) was introduced to the House as a whole. HB 571 would work to end the commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking of children. More significantly, Section 97-29-49 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 was amended in the bill to decriminalize prostitution so minors under 18 cannot be charged with prostitution. The bill comes after Speaker Philip Gunn's Commission on Public Policy hosted a summit on human trafficking in Mississippi on October 3, 2018. HB 571 passed with a bipartisan vote of 116-3, and it will be sent to the Senate for consideration.

Other relatively uncontested bills brought to the House floor included a bill prohibiting any food product that contains animal tissue and plant or insect-based products from being labeled as meat ([HB 793](#)), legislation increasing the maximum annual gross sales of a cottage food operation ([HB 702](#)) and a bill that would exclude equipment operated and owned by the Mississippi Military Department from the definition of commercial motor vehicle under the Commercial Driver's License Act ([HB 751](#)).

Visitors at the Capitol this week included members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Mississippi Nurses Association, the American Cancer Society and Canopy Children's Solutions.

Next week, committees will meet even more frequently as the Legislature approaches the next deadline. After Tuesday, Feb. 5, no additional bills will be added to the House calendar for consideration, and members will meet in session for longer periods of time to discuss the bills that have made it out of committees.