

By: Senator(s) Dearing

To: Environment Prot,
Cons and Water Res

SENATE BILL NO. 2860
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE STATEWIDE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION
2 MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COORDINATING COUNCIL; TO SPECIFY THE MEMBERSHIP
3 OF THE COUNCIL AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE
4 COUNCIL; TO REQUIRE THE COORDINATING COUNCIL TO DEVELOP AND
5 PREPARE A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
6 A STATEWIDE SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND TO
7 PROVIDE FOR THE MINIMUM CONTENTS OF THAT PLAN; TO REQUIRE THE
8 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY TO SERVE AS COORDINATOR FOR
9 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
12 "Statewide Scientific Information Management Act of 1999."

13 SECTION 2. (1) The Legislature finds that:

14 (a) Numerous federal and state agencies collect and
15 manage scientific information relating to the environment and
16 natural resources of the state;

17 (b) Scientific information is a strategic asset in the
18 management of our natural resources, exploration for oil and gas
19 and economic development activities; and

20 (c) Lack of coordination in the collection and
21 management of scientific information can lead to duplication of
22 efforts and inefficient information management thus leading to
23 increased and unnecessary costs.

24 (2) The purpose of this act is to establish a statewide
25 coordinated effort to provide for the management of scientific
26 information to ensure the effective and efficient collection,
27 management, dissemination and analysis of scientific information
28 available to the state and to provide that information in a
29 user-friendly format to governmental agencies, academic

30 institutions, other public and private organizations and the
31 general public for economic development, natural resources and
32 environmental management and other purposes.

33 SECTION 3. For purposes of this act, the following terms
34 shall have the meaning ascribed herein unless the context clearly
35 indicates otherwise:

36 (a) "Scientific information" means information
37 associated with the monitoring and management of the environment
38 and natural resources of a specifically targeted geographic area
39 that is collected, analyzed, managed, updated by and used among
40 agencies, departments, associations and other organizations
41 concerned with or responsible for the geographic area.

42 (b) "Scientific information management system" means a
43 management system which would allow scientific information to be
44 collected, processed, analyzed, managed, updated and subsequently
45 accessed by users of that information.

46 SECTION 4. (1) There is created the Mississippi Statewide
47 Scientific Information Management System Coordinating Council,
48 hereinafter referred to as "coordinating council," for the purpose
49 of developing a strategic plan for a statewide scientific
50 information management system and serving as a coordinating entity
51 for all aspects of scientific information management.

52 (2) (a) The council shall consist of the following voting
53 members: the Executive Director of the Department of
54 Environmental Quality; the Executive Director of the Department of
55 Economic and Community Development; the Executive Director of the
56 Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; the Executive
57 Director of the Department of Marine Resources; the State Health
58 Officer; the State Forester; the Executive Director of the
59 Department of Transportation; the Chairman of the Mississippi
60 Water Resources Advisory Council; the Vice-President for Research
61 and Sponsored Programs at each university on the Mississippi
62 Research Consortium; the Vice-President for Agriculture, Forestry
63 and Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University; the State
64 Director of Technology Transfer; the Center Director of the
65 National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Stennis Space
66 Center; the District Chief, Mississippi District, United States

67 Geological Survey; the Executive Director of the Mississippi
68 Automated Resource Information System; the Executive Director of
69 the Department of Information Technology Services; the President
70 of the Institute of Technology Development; and two (2)
71 representatives of the private sector user community appointed by
72 the Governor.

73 Members of the coordinating council not appointed by the
74 Governor shall serve a term concurrent with their term of office
75 in their respective position. Nonappointed members may designate
76 an alternate to serve in their stead and the alternate shall have
77 the authority to act for the designating member.

78 Members of the council appointed by the Governor shall serve
79 four-year terms.

80 (b) In addition to the members of the coordinating
81 council specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection, the
82 coordinating council may invite, as participating members,
83 representatives of any other state and federal organizations, or
84 individuals possessing appropriate expertise or who have a viable
85 interest in the development and implementation of the statewide
86 scientific information management system.

87 (c) The Chairman of the Senate Environmental
88 Protection, Conservation and Water Resources Committee and one (1)
89 member of that committee appointed by the chairman may attend
90 meetings of the coordinating council. The Speaker of the House of
91 Representatives may designate the Chairman of the House
92 Conservation and Water Resources Committee and one (1) member of
93 that committee to attend any meeting of the coordinating council.

94 The appointing authorities may designate alternate members from
95 their respective houses to serve when the regular designees are
96 unable to attend such meetings of the coordinating council. The
97 legislative designees shall have no jurisdiction or vote on any
98 matter within the jurisdiction of the coordinating council. For
99 attending meetings of the coordinating council, the legislators

100 shall receive per diem and expenses which shall be paid from the
101 contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the same
102 amounts as provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is
103 not in session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending
104 meetings of the coordinating council will be paid while the
105 Legislature is in session. No per diem and expenses will be paid
106 except for attending meetings of the coordinating council without
107 prior approval of the proper committee in their respective houses.

108 (d) Original appointments to the coordinating council
109 shall be made no later than October 1, 1999. The Governor shall
110 require adequate disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by
111 appointed members of the coordinating council. Vacancies on the
112 coordinating council shall be filled by appointment in the same
113 manner as the original appointments.

114 (e) The coordinating council shall elect from its
115 membership a chairperson to preside over meetings and
116 vice-chairperson to preside in the absence of the chairperson or
117 when the chairperson shall be excused. The coordinating council
118 shall adopt procedures governing the manner of conducting its
119 business. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum to
120 do business.

121 (f) Members of the coordinating council shall serve
122 without compensation, except as otherwise provided in paragraph c
123 of this subsection. At the direction of the chairman of the
124 coordinating council and contingent upon the availability of
125 sufficient funds, each member may receive reimbursement for
126 reasonable expenses, including travel expenses in accordance with
127 rates established pursuant to Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of
128 1972, incurred in attending meetings of the coordinating council.

129 (3) The coordinating council shall convene before November
130 15, 1999.

131 (4) The coordinating council shall not employ any permanent
132 staff, rent or occupy independent office space or otherwise

133 establish a full-time office.

134 (5) In conducting its activities under this act, the
135 coordinating council may elicit the support of and participation
136 by any state or local governmental agency as may be necessary or
137 appropriate. All state and local governmental agencies shall
138 provide support or participation as requested.

139 (6) The coordinating council may exercise those duties and
140 powers necessary to carry out the purposes of this act, including,
141 but not limited to, the following functions:

142 (a) Conduct, or cause to be conducted any studies,
143 analyses or evaluations related to the development and
144 implementation of a scientific information management system;

145 (b) Apply and contract for and accept any grants,
146 public or private funds, gifts or proceeds in furtherance of the
147 activities of the coordinating council;

148 (c) Authorize the Executive Director of the Department
149 of Environmental Quality to enter into all contracts or execute
150 all instruments, on behalf of the coordinating council, and do all
151 acts necessary, desirable or convenient to carry out any power
152 expressly granted to the council in this chapter; and

153 (d) Expend or distribute any funds or assets in its
154 custody or under its control appropriate in carrying out the
155 purposes of this act.

156 SECTION 5. (1) Before November 15, 2000, the Mississippi
157 Scientific Information Management System Coordinating Council
158 shall develop and prepare a strategic plan for the development and
159 implementation of a statewide scientific information management
160 system.

161 (2) The strategic plan shall include, but not be limited to,
162 the following:

163 (a) A detailed analysis of the sources, types, amounts
164 and methods by which scientific information is currently collected
165 in the state and of methods or systems currently used to manage

166 that scientific information;

167 (b) An identification of the current costs of
168 collection, management, analysis, updating, use and dissemination
169 of scientific information in the state with particular emphasis on
170 costs to state agencies;

171 (c) A description of current efforts by agencies and
172 organizations collecting scientific information to provide broad
173 access to that information;

174 (d) An identification of planned scientific information
175 management programs and needs and an evaluation of how those
176 planned programs or needs may be met or integrated into the
177 statewide scientific information management system;

178 (e) A clearly-defined, comprehensive statement of the
179 mission, goals and objectives of the statewide scientific
180 information management system;

181 (f) A detailed analysis of the benefits and
182 capabilities of a statewide scientific information management
183 system;

184 (g) A plan for the development and implementation of a
185 statewide scientific information management system in a phased
186 manner;

187 (h) A timeline for the development and implementation
188 of a statewide scientific information management system;

189 (i) A detailed analysis and estimate of the costs for
190 development and implementation of the statewide scientific
191 information management system and a recommended method for funding
192 the development and implementation of the system; and

193 (j) Any other information the coordinating council
194 deems appropriate.

195 (3) In addition, the strategic plan shall recommend
196 appropriate policies and standards for use in management of
197 scientific information and for providing access to that
198 information. The strategic plan shall also address information

199 accuracy and quality issues, ease of access issues, training and
200 technical support issues and interagency coordination issues.

201 (4) Upon completion of the strategic plan, the coordinating
202 council shall provide copies to the Governor, the Lieutenant
203 Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
204 Chairmen of the Senate Environmental Protection, Conservation and
205 Water Resources Committee and the Senate Appropriations Committee,
206 the Chairmen of the House Conservation and Water Resources
207 Committee and the House Appropriations Committee, the Legislative
208 Budget Office, the Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review
209 Committee and the Legislative Reference Bureau.

210 SECTION 6. The Department of Environmental Quality shall
211 serve as the coordinator for implementation of this act. The
212 Department of Environmental Quality shall provide any technical
213 and other support services and personnel as the Mississippi
214 Scientific Information Management System Coordinating Council may
215 require in the performance of its functions. The Department of
216 Environmental Quality shall administer any funds made available to
217 the coordinating council for its use and shall at the request and
218 on behalf of the coordinating council, contract for services using
219 any funds available to the coordinating council.

220 SECTION 7. Sections 1 through 6 of this act shall be
221 codified as a new chapter in Title 49.

222 SECTION 8. This act shall take effect and be in force from
223 and after July 1, 1999.