

By: Senator(s) Tollison

To: Fees, Salaries and Administration

SENATE BILL NO. 2495

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 25-3-41, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 ALLOW EMPLOYEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO EXPEND  
3 FUNDS FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF THE CONTINENTAL LIMITS OF THE UNITED  
4 STATES UPON APPROVAL BY THE PRESIDENT OR HEAD OF THE INSTITUTION,  
5 INSTEAD OF APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
6 AND ADMINISTRATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
9 amended as follows:

10 25-3-41. (1) When any officer or employee of the State of  
11 Mississippi, or any department, agency or institution thereof,  
12 after first being duly authorized, is required to travel in the  
13 performance of his official duties, the officer or employee shall  
14 receive as expenses for each mile actually and necessarily  
15 traveled, when the travel is done by a privately-owned automobile  
16 or other privately-owned motor vehicle, the mileage reimbursement  
17 rate allowable to federal employees for the use of a  
18 privately-owned vehicle while on official travel.

19 (2) When any officer or employee of any county or  
20 municipality, or of any agency, board or commission thereof, after  
21 first being duly authorized, is required to travel in the  
22 performance of his official duties, the officer or employee shall  
23 receive as expenses Twenty Cents (20¢) for each mile actually and  
24 necessarily traveled, when the travel is done by a privately-owned  
25 motor vehicle; provided, however, that the governing authorities  
26 of a county or municipality may, in their discretion, authorize an  
27 increase in the mileage reimbursement of officers and employees of  
28 the county or municipality, or of any agency, board or commission  
29 thereof, in an amount not to exceed the mileage reimbursement rate

30 authorized for officers and employees of the State of Mississippi  
31 in subsection (1) of this section.

32 (3) Where two (2) or more officers or employees travel in  
33 one (1) privately-owned motor vehicle, only one (1) travel expense  
34 allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any  
35 one (1) trip. When the travel is done by means of a public  
36 carrier or other means not involving a privately-owned motor  
37 vehicle, then the officer or employee shall receive as travel  
38 expense the actual fare or other expenses incurred in such travel.

39 (4) In addition to the foregoing, a public officer or  
40 employee shall be reimbursed for other actual expenses such as  
41 meals, lodging and other necessary expenses incurred in the course  
42 of the travel, subject to limitations placed on meals for  
43 intrastate and interstate official travel by the Department of  
44 Finance and Administration, provided, that the Legislative Budget  
45 Office shall place any limitations for expenditures made on  
46 matters under the jurisdiction of the Legislature. The Department  
47 of Finance and Administration shall set a maximum daily  
48 expenditure annually for such meals and shall notify officers and  
49 employees of changes to these allowances immediately upon approval  
50 of the changes. Travel by airline shall be at the tourist rate  
51 unless that space was unavailable. The officer or employee shall  
52 certify that tourist accommodations were not available if travel  
53 is performed in first class airline accommodations. Itemized  
54 expense accounts shall be submitted by those officers or employees  
55 in such number as the department, agency or institution may  
56 require; but in any case one (1) copy shall be furnished by state  
57 departments, agencies or institutions to the Department of Finance  
58 and Administration for preaudit or postaudit. The Department of  
59 Finance and Administration shall promulgate and adopt reasonable  
60 rules and regulations which it deems necessary and requisite to  
61 effectuate economies for all expenses authorized and paid pursuant  
62 to this section. Requisitions shall be made on the State Fiscal

63 Officer who shall issue his warrant on the State Treasurer.  
64 Provided, however, that the provisions of this section shall not  
65 include agencies financed entirely by federal funds and audited by  
66 federal auditors.

67 (5) Any officer or employee of a county or municipality, or  
68 any department, board or commission thereof, who is required to  
69 travel in the performance of his official duties, may receive  
70 funds before the travel, in the discretion of the administrative  
71 head of the county or municipal department, board or commission  
72 involved, for the purpose of paying necessary expenses incurred  
73 during the travel. Upon return from the travel, the officer or  
74 employee shall provide receipts of transportation, lodging, meals,  
75 fees and any other expenses incurred during the travel. Any  
76 portion of the funds advanced which is not expended during the  
77 travel shall be returned by the officer or employee. The  
78 Department of Audit shall adopt rules and regulations regarding  
79 advance payment of travel expenses and submission of receipts to  
80 ensure proper control and strict accountability for those payments  
81 and expenses.

82 (6) No state or federal funds received from any source by  
83 any arm or agency of the state shall be expended in traveling  
84 outside of the continental limits of the United States until the  
85 governing body or head of the agency makes a finding and  
86 determination that the travel would be extremely beneficial to the  
87 state agency and obtains a written concurrence thereof from the  
88 Governor, or his designee, and the Department of Finance and  
89 Administration. However, employees of state institutions of  
90 higher learning may expend funds for travel outside of the  
91 continental limits of the United States upon a finding by the  
92 president or head of the institution that the travel would be  
93 extremely beneficial to the institution.

94 (7) Where any officer or employee of the State of  
95 Mississippi, or any department, agency or institution thereof, or

96 of any county or municipality, or of any agency, board or  
97 commission thereof, is authorized to receive travel reimbursement  
98 under any other provision of law, the reimbursement may be paid  
99 under the provisions of this section or the other section, but not  
100 under both.

101 (8) When the Governor or Lieutenant Governor appoints a  
102 person to a board, commission or other position that requires  
103 confirmation by the Senate, the person may receive reimbursement  
104 for mileage and other actual expenses incurred in the performance  
105 of official duties before the appointment is confirmed by the  
106 Senate, as reimbursement for those expenses is authorized under  
107 this section.

108 (9) (a) The Department of Finance and Administration may  
109 contract with one or more commercial travel agencies, after  
110 receiving competitive bids or proposals therefor, for that travel  
111 agency or agencies to provide necessary travel services for state  
112 officers and employees. Municipal and county officers and  
113 municipal and county employees may also participate in the state  
114 travel agency contract and utilize these travel services for  
115 official municipal or county travel. However, the administrative  
116 head of each state institution of higher learning may, in his  
117 discretion, contract with a commercial travel agency to provide  
118 necessary travel services for all academic officials and staff of  
119 the university in lieu of participation in the state travel agency  
120 contract. Any such decision by a university to contract with a  
121 separate travel agency shall be approved by the Board of Trustees  
122 of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the Executive  
123 Director of the Department of Finance and Administration.

124 (b) Before executing a contract with one or more travel  
125 agencies, the Department of Finance and Administration shall  
126 advertise for competitive bids or proposals once a week for two  
127 (2) consecutive weeks in a regular newspaper having a general  
128 circulation throughout the State of Mississippi. If the

129 department determines that it should not contract with any of the  
130 bidders initially submitting proposals, the department may reject  
131 all those bids, advertise as provided in this paragraph and  
132 receive new proposals before executing the contract or contracts.  
133 The contract or contracts may be for a period not greater than  
134 three (3) years, with an option for the travel agency or agencies  
135 to renew the contract or contracts on a one-year basis on the same  
136 terms as the original contract or contracts, for a maximum of two  
137 (2) renewals. After the travel agency or agencies have renewed  
138 the contract twice or have declined to renew the contract for the  
139 maximum number of times, the Department of Finance and  
140 Administration shall advertise for bids in the manner required by  
141 this paragraph and execute a new contract or contracts.

142 (c) Whenever any state officer or employee travels in  
143 the performance of his official duties by airline or other public  
144 carrier, he may have his travel arrangements handled by that  
145 travel agency or agencies. The amount paid for airline  
146 transportation for any state officer or employee, whether the  
147 travel was arranged by that travel agency or agencies or was  
148 arranged otherwise, shall not exceed the amount specified in the  
149 state contract established by the Department of Finance and  
150 Administration, Office of Purchasing and Travel, unless prior  
151 approval is obtained from the office.

152 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
153 and after its passage.