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To: Universities and  
Colleges; Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 1034  
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO ENACT THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION REVITALIZATION  
2 ACT OF 2006; TO MAKE LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; TO CREATE THE SPECIAL  
3 TASK FORCE FOR REVITALIZATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION; TO  
4 PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE TASK FORCE; TO ESTABLISH WITHIN  
5 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AN  
6 OFFICE TO SERVE THE TASK FORCE; TO SET FORTH DUTIES AND  
7 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE, AND TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI  
8 DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE STAFF AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE  
9 OFFICE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL FUNCTION AS AN  
10 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL GROUP CHARGED WITH SETTING  
11 SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE GOALS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE  
12 MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION; TO REQUIRE THE HOLDING OF PUBLIC  
13 HEARINGS IN THE REGION AND THE PREPARATION OF A LONG-RANGE ACTION  
14 PLAN FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE REGION AND SPECIFY THE PARTS OF  
15 THE PLAN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

17 **SECTION 1.** This act may be cited as the "Mississippi Delta  
18 Region Revitalization Act of 2006."

19 **SECTION 2.** (1) For purposes of this act, the Mississippi  
20 Delta Region, which may be hereinafter referred to as the region,  
21 shall be defined as the western section of the State of  
22 Mississippi that lies between the Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers,  
23 encompassing in part or whole the counties of Bolivar, Carroll,  
24 Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Panola, Quitman,  
25 Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington and  
26 Yazoo.

27 (2) The Legislature finds that the prospective well-being of  
28 the people of the Mississippi Delta Region of the state requires  
29 that the economic and other development of the region should be  
30 strategically, comprehensively and exhaustively planned and that  
31 the plan be systematically implemented. The Legislature further  
32 finds that the state should foster open communication between  
33 government and the private sectors of our economy in the

34 Mississippi Delta Region and that the state should provide a  
35 policy, a vision and a framework to encourage an environment  
36 conducive to the revitalization of our state's Delta region.

37 (3) The Legislature hereby declares that the public policy  
38 of this state requires an overall, comprehensive and coordinated  
39 plan for maximum and accelerated revitalization of the Mississippi  
40 Delta Region.

41 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Special Task Force for Revitalization of  
42 the Mississippi Delta Region is hereby created. The task force  
43 shall be composed of twenty-five (25) members, to be appointed as  
44 follows:

45 (a) Four (4) members of the Mississippi House of  
46 Representatives who reside in the Mississippi Delta Region,  
47 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

48 (b) Four (4) members of the Mississippi State Senate,  
49 who reside in the Mississippi Delta Region, appointed by the  
50 Lieutenant Governor.

51 (c) Two (2) members from the state's public  
52 universities or from the state's community and junior colleges  
53 with a broad knowledge of research planning and community and  
54 economic development appointed by the Speaker of the House.

55 (d) Two (2) members from the state's public  
56 universities or from the state's community and junior colleges  
57 with a broad knowledge of research planning and community and  
58 economic development appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

59 (e) One (1) member from each of the following five (5)  
60 planning and development districts in the region: North Central  
61 Planning and Development District, North Delta Planning and  
62 Development District, South Planning and Development District,  
63 Southwest Planning and Development District and Central Planning  
64 and Development District. Each member from this paragraph (e) may  
65 or may not be municipal or county officials who are appointed by

66 the respective board of directors, but must reside in the  
67 Mississippi Delta region.

68 (f) One (1) member from the membership or staffs of the  
69 Mississippi Association of Supervisors and the Mississippi  
70 Municipal Association. These members will be appointed to the  
71 task force by the Governor from recommendations made to the board  
72 by the respective organizations.

73 (g) The Executive Director of the Mississippi  
74 Development Authority or his designee.

75 (h) Five (5) members to be selected by the Governor,  
76 three (3) of whom shall be representatives of business or  
77 entrepreneurial enterprises in the Mississippi Delta Region.

78 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that the task force  
79 will be organized, selected and constituted in such a way that it  
80 represents the most talented individuals who could possibly be  
81 assembled to address the concerns and issues associated with the  
82 revitalization of the Mississippi Delta Region. Task force  
83 members shall be appointed by May 1, 2006, and the task force  
84 shall have its organizational meeting no later than May 15, 2006.  
85 The task force shall elect from among its membership a chairman  
86 and vice chairman. Terms of service of task force members shall  
87 coincide with the duration of the task force.

88 (3) All persons selected for service on the task force shall  
89 be creative, knowledgeable and accomplished people with the  
90 capacity to contribute to the mission of the task force.  
91 Vacancies on the task force shall be filled in a manner consistent  
92 with original appointments.

93 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is hereby established within the Board  
94 of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning an office  
95 to serve the Special Task Force for Revitalization of the  
96 Mississippi Delta Region. The office shall:

97           (a) Provide staff support, including an employee to  
98 serve as the task force coordinator, to the task force and shall  
99 organize and coordinate the work of the task force.

100           (b) Make available office space for the task force to  
101 include conference room facilities.

102           (c) Be responsible for preparing and maintaining a  
103 long-range plan for the revitalization and economic and other  
104 development of the state's Delta region. The plan shall be  
105 sufficiently broad in scope so as to address all regional, state,  
106 national and international economic, demographic, education, work  
107 force training, community, housing, public health, crime, natural  
108 resource and infrastructure factors relating to the overall  
109 status, revitalization and development of the Mississippi Delta  
110 Region.

111           (d) Work in coordination with the Mississippi  
112 Development Authority in all aspects of serving the task force.

113           (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall provide any  
114 staff support to the office that it or the task force may request.

115           **SECTION 5.** The mission and role of the special task force  
116 shall be to function as an independent research and analytical  
117 group charged with setting measurable, achievable and significant  
118 goals to revitalize the Mississippi Delta Region. The task force  
119 shall conduct public hearings in the region and make  
120 recommendations regarding such goals and present findings and  
121 detailed recommendations which will enable the region to achieve  
122 the stated goals. Recommendations of the task force shall be  
123 specific to the extent that actions needed are explicitly set out  
124 and supported with in-depth analyses as to the contributions such  
125 actions would have on the revitalization of the region. All  
126 recommendations shall be accompanied by specific requests with  
127 respect to allocation of resources, including any additional  
128 funding necessary to fund the revitalization activities.

129           **SECTION 6.** With research and recommendations prepared by the  
130 task force, the office shall prepare a long-range action plan for  
131 the revitalization of the region, which shall consist of five (5)  
132 parts as provided in this act.

133           **SECTION 7.** Part I of the plan will identify specific,  
134 quantifiable goals to be accomplished in the next succeeding  
135 five-, ten- and twenty-year periods. Before proposing the goals  
136 required for Part I of the plan, at least three (3) public  
137 hearings shall be held in each of the northern, central and  
138 southern portions of the region, in order to receive public input  
139 on the goal setting process and deliberations pertaining to that  
140 process.

141           The goals proposed by the office shall be reasonable,  
142 challenging, achievable and shall be expressed in measures of  
143 achievement that would represent comparative and significant  
144 economic progress and revitalization for the region.

145           **SECTION 8.** Part II of the economic development plan shall  
146 include:

147                   (a) An inventory and analysis of the region's  
148 competitive advantages and an inventory and analysis of factors  
149 which tend to retard economic and other development in the region;

150                   (b) Identification and analysis of state, national and  
151 international economic trends affecting the region's development;

152                   (c) An analysis and evaluation of the state's taxing  
153 effort as it affects the region's economic development and other  
154 efforts and an analysis of how economic development goals and  
155 objectives in the region relate to projected short- and long-term  
156 state and local revenues dedicated to the region and to the  
157 possible and potential impact on the region's revenue structure;

158                   (d) An identification and analysis of key factors  
159 affecting economic development in the region;

160 (e) An identification and analysis of factors affecting  
161 industrial location and decisions affecting expansion of existing  
162 business and industry within the region;

163 (f) An analysis of the region's incentive programs and  
164 economic development strategies and a comparison with other  
165 regions of the state;

166 (g) An analysis of the region's work force and of the  
167 economic and educational conditions that the work force will face  
168 in future years;

169 (h) An analysis of and assessment of the minority  
170 business and commercial activity, capability, potential and needs  
171 in the region;

172 (i) An analysis of and assessment of income in the  
173 region by various income groups to provide the analytical base for  
174 developing programs and recommendations to address low income high  
175 unemployment problems in the region;

176 (j) An analysis and assessment of programs in other  
177 states and in the federal government which seek to foster,  
178 encourage and assist minority involvement in and contributions  
179 toward economic development. The programs to be assessed shall  
180 include, but not be limited to, set aside procurement programs.

181 **SECTION 9.** (1) Part III of the economic development plan  
182 shall provide a procedure for monitoring the implementation of  
183 efforts proposed by the task force and the plan. In formulating  
184 this procedure, the office will survey, identify and analyze every  
185 government program and private resource and activity that is  
186 available to, that is being applied toward or that contributes to  
187 the accomplishment of the goals set in the long-range plan. The  
188 resources and programs of local, state and federal government and  
189 private business shall be identified and analyzed to determine the  
190 specific areas in which they contribute to achievement of the  
191 overall goals.

192           (2) Each agency and institution of state government involved  
193 in economic, demographic, education, work force training,  
194 community, housing, public health, crime, natural resources and  
195 infrastructure aspects relating to the overall revitalization and  
196 development of the Mississippi Delta Region is directed to prepare  
197 and submit to the office and the Mississippi Development  
198 Authority, work programs covering its activities in the relevant  
199 aspects. The office shall specify a uniform format for agencies  
200 to follow in preparing their work programs. These work programs  
201 shall cover in general the next five (5) years of the plan and, in  
202 significant detail, the upcoming fiscal year. Work programs shall  
203 be submitted by October 1, 2006, for fiscal year 2007 by those  
204 agencies identified as being required to submit work programs.

205           **SECTION 10.** Part IV of the plan shall be an analysis and  
206 evaluation of materials in Parts II and III of the plan. This  
207 phase of the plan shall also make an overall evaluation of the  
208 relative contributions that the resources and efforts identified  
209 in Part III are making toward achievement of the overall goals.  
210 This phase of the plan shall contain specific recommendations for  
211 inclusion in the region's efforts:

212           (a) Specific programs for accelerating the region's  
213 overall economic development through greater results from the  
214 state's agricultural resources;

215           (b) Specific programs for rural areas of the region and  
216 those areas and identifiable groups of people with the highest  
217 unemployment and lowest per capita incomes;

218           (c) Specific programs for international trade and the  
219 attraction of foreign investment through development of  
220 specialized, university-based or other programs;

221           (d) The specific niches that Mississippi has and on  
222 which it should focus development efforts or those niches the  
223 region should seek to develop; and

224 (e) Specific minority enterprise assistance and  
225 development programs that would be needed and recommended.

226 **SECTION 11.** (1) Part V of the economic development plan  
227 shall consist of recommendations. The recommendations shall be  
228 based on Part IV of the plan and shall seek to improve in every  
229 possible and feasible manner the coordination and implementation  
230 of all activities and programs outlined and identified as required  
231 in Part III of the plan.

232 (2) The plan shall make recommendations regarding new  
233 initiatives and new programs and the alteration or expansion of  
234 existing programs as deemed necessary to achieve the goals  
235 established. The recommendations shall state specifically what is  
236 to be done, who is to do it and how it is to be done and shall  
237 also set out the cost benefits of each recommendation.

238 (3) The office, in consultation with the task force and the  
239 Mississippi Development Authority, shall develop a legislative  
240 package containing any statutory actions required to implement the  
241 goals established in the state long-range plan for economic  
242 development. The legislative package shall be prepared and  
243 presented in bill format.

244 **SECTION 12.** All parts of the plan shall be completed no  
245 later than December 1, 2006. A preliminary report on the status  
246 of the plan shall be made to the Joint Legislative Budget  
247 Committee in November 2006.

248 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
249 and after its passage.