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To: Universities and
Colleges; Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 1034
(As Sent to Governor)

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 PROVIDE THAT THE
5 UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTER BUREAU OF COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE
6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SHALL SERVE THE TASK FORCE; TO SET
7 FORTH DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BUREAU, AND TO REQUIRE
8 THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE STAFF AND OTHER
9 SUPPORT TO THE BUREAU; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL
10 FUNCTION AS AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL GROUP CHARGED
11 WITH SETTING SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE GOALS FOR THE
12 REVITALIZATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION; TO REQUIRE THE
13 HOLDING OF PUBLIC HEARINGS IN THE REGION AND THE PREPARATION OF A
14 LONG-RANGE ACTION PLAN FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE REGION AND
15 SPECIFY THE PARTS OF 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,
26 Yazoo, Jefferson and Claiborne.

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-seven (27) 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, and
47 one (1) citizen member at large who is a resident of the Delta
48 Region, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

49 (b) Four (4) members of the Mississippi State Senate
50 who reside in the Mississippi Delta Region, and one (1) citizen
51 member at large who is a resident of the Delta Region, appointed
52 by the Lieutenant Governor.

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

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

61 (e) One (1) member from each of the following five (5)
62 planning and development districts in the region: North Central
63 Planning and Development District, North Delta Planning and
64 Development District, South Planning and Development District,
65 Southwest Planning and Development District and Central Planning
66 and Development District. Each member from this paragraph (e) may

67 or may not be municipal or county officials who are appointed by
68 the respective board of directors, but must reside in the
69 Mississippi Delta Region.

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

75 (g) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
76 Development Authority, or his designee.

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

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

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

95 **SECTION 4.** (1) The University Research Center Bureau of
96 Comprehensive Long-Range Economic Development Planning shall serve
97 the Special Task Force for Revitalization of the Mississippi Delta
98 Region. The bureau shall:

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

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

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

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

115 (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall provide any
116 staff support to the bureau that it or the task force may request.

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

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

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

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

147 SECTION 8. Part II of the economic development plan shall
148 include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

250 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
251 and after its passage; and shall stand repealed on July 1, 2009.