To: Judiciary B; 
Accountability, Efficiency, Transparency

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2020

By: Representative Anderson (110th)

HOUSE BILL NO. 790

AN ACT TO REQUIRE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO CONTACT THE MISSISSIPPI BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION WHEN THERE IS AN OFFICER-INVOLVED DEATH, INVOLVING ONE OF ITS OFFICERS; TO REQUIRE THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION TO INVESTIGATE SUCH OFFICER-INVOLVED DEATHS; TO REQUIRE THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION TO PROVIDE THE RESULTS OF SUCH INVESTIGATION TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL; TO REQUIRE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE GRAND JURY; TO REQUIRE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO, IF RESULTS REQUIRE PRESENTATION BEFORE THE GRAND JURY, TO APPOINT A DISTRICT ATTORNEY AS A SPECIAL PROSECUTOR TO PRESENT THE EVIDENCE TO THE GRAND JURY; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 45-1-6 AND 99-19-77, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE CERTAIN DUTIES OF THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 45-3-21, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE HIGHWAY SAFETY PATROL; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 25-31-21, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE IMpaneling OF THE GRAND JURY, FOR PURPOSES OF AMENDMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) As used in this act, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

(a) "Law enforcement agency" means any agency or unit of government or any municipality of the state or any political subdivision thereof, or any agent thereof which has constitutional or statutory authority to employ or appoint persons as officers,
whether such agency or unit has an internal investigation division or not. The term also includes any private entity which has contracted with the state or county for the operation and maintenance of a nonjuvenile detention facility.

(b) "Law enforcement officer" means any person who is elected, appointed or employed full-time or part-time by any unit of government or municipality of the state or any political subdivision thereof:

(i) Who is vested with authority to bear arms and make arrests; and

(ii) Whose primary responsibility is the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of the penal, criminal, traffic or highway laws of the state. The term includes all certified supervisory, correctional officer, correctional probation officer and command personnel whose duties, in whole or in part, include the supervision, training, guidance and management responsibilities of full-time law enforcement officers, part-time law enforcement officers or auxiliary law enforcement officers.

(c) "Officer-involved death" means a death of an individual that resulted directly from an act or an omission of a law enforcement officer while the law enforcement officer is on duty and acting within the scope of his or her authority, or while the law enforcement officer is off duty but performing activities that are within the scope of his or her law enforcement duties.
(2) When a law enforcement officer is implicated in any manner in an officer-involved death, the law enforcement agency that employs the law enforcement officer shall notify the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation to investigate the circumstances of the death. Upon notification from a law enforcement agency, the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation shall investigate the circumstances of the officer-involved death. After the investigation is complete, the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation shall provide all results of the investigation to the Attorney General.

The Attorney General shall assess the results of the investigation to determine whether the evidence should be brought before a grand jury. If the Attorney General determines that the evidence requires presentation to the grand jury, the Attorney General shall appoint a district attorney to serve as special prosecutor to present the evidence to the grand jury. The district attorney chosen by the Attorney General shall not be the district attorney in the county in which the death occurred. The special prosecutor shall be responsible for prosecuting any criminal charges that are filed in connection with the officer-involved death.

SECTION 2. Section 45-1-6, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

45-1-6. (1) The Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation is authorized to retain on a contractual basis such
persons as he shall deem necessary to detect and apprehend
violators of the criminal statutes of this state.

(2) Those persons contracting with the Director of the
Mississippi Bureau of Investigation pursuant to subsection (1)
shall be known and hereinafter referred to as "special contract
agents."

(3) The investigative services provided for in this section
shall be designed to support local law enforcement efforts.

(4) Special contract investigators shall have all powers
necessary and incidental to the fulfillment of their contractual
obligations, including the power of arrest when authorized by the
Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation.

(5) No person shall be a special contract investigator
unless he is at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

(6) The Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation
shall conduct a background investigation of all potential special
contract investigators. All contract agents must meet the minimum
standard requirements established by the Board on Law Enforcement
Officer Standards and Training.

(7) Any contract pursuant to subsection (1) shall be:
(a) Reduced to writing; and
(b) Terminable upon written notice by either party, and
shall in any event terminate one (1) year from the date of
signing; and
(c) Approved as to form by the Attorney General.
Such contracts shall not be public records and shall not be available for inspection under the provisions of a law providing for the inspection of public records as now or hereafter amended.

(8) Special contract investigators shall not be considered employees of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation for any purpose.

(9) The Director of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation shall have all powers necessary and incidental to the effective operation of this section.

(10) Notwithstanding any other provisions contained in this section, all contracts authorized under this section and related matters shall be made available to the Legislative Budget Office and the Department of Finance and Administration.

**SECTION 3.** Section 99-19-77, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

99-19-77. In addition to any criminal penalties or fines, the court may impose an assessment against a defendant convicted of a felony violation, or a Class I violation that is punishable as provided in Section 49-7-141, investigated by the Office of the Attorney General, the district attorneys, sheriffs, the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation, Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and municipal police departments which may cover all reasonable costs of the investigation. Costs are to be paid to
the appropriate governmental entity incurring the particular item
of cost and include, but are not limited to, the cost of
investigators, service of process, court reporters, expert
witnesses and attorney's fees, and transportation costs expended
by the governmental entity in the investigation of such case, and
must be used to augment the governmental entity's existing budget
and not to supplant it.

SECTION 4. Section 45-3-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
brought forward as follows:

45-3-21. (1) The powers and duties of the Highway Safety
Patrol shall be, in addition to all others prescribed by law, as
follows:

(a) To enforce all of the traffic laws, rules and
regulations of the State of Mississippi upon all highways of the
state highway system and the rights-of-way of such highways;
provided, however, that if any person commits an offense upon the
state highway system and be pursued by a member of the Highway
Safety Patrol, such patrol officer may pursue and apprehend such
offender upon any of the highways or public roads of this state,
or to any other place to which such offender may flee.

(b) To enforce all rules and regulations of the
commissioner promulgated pursuant to legal authority.

(c) When so directed by the Governor, to enforce any of
the laws of this state upon any of the highways or public roads
thereof.
(d) Upon the request of the State Tax Commission, and with the approval of the Governor, to enforce all of the provisions of law with reference to the registration, license and taxation of vehicles using the highways of this state, and relative to the sizes, weights and load limits of such vehicles, and to enforce the provisions of all other laws administered by the State Tax Commission upon any of the highways or public roads of this state; and for such purpose the Highway Safety Patrol shall have the authority to collect and receive all taxes which may be due under any of such laws, and to report and remit same to the State Tax Commission in the manner required by law, or the rules and regulations of the commission.

(e) Upon request of the Mississippi Transportation Commission, and when so instructed by the commissioner, to aid and assist in the enforcement of all laws which such agencies are authorized or required to enforce, and in the enforcement of the rules and regulations of such agencies, including the Mississippi Motor Carrier Regulatory Law of 1938 and rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

(f) To arrest without warrant any person or persons committing or attempting to commit any misdemeanor, felony or breach of the peace within their presence or view, and to pursue and so arrest any person committing such an offense to and at any place in the State of Mississippi where he may go or be. Nothing
herein shall be construed as granting the Mississippi Highway
Safety Patrol general police powers.

(g) To aid and assist any law enforcement officer whose
life or safety is in jeopardy. Additionally, officers of the
Highway Safety Patrol may arrest without warrant any fugitive from
justice who has escaped or who is using the highways of the state
in an attempt to flee. With the approval of the commissioner or
his designee, officers of the Highway Safety Patrol may assist
other law enforcement agencies in manhunts for convicted felons
who have escaped and/or for alleged felons where there is probable
cause to believe that the person being sought committed the felony
and a felony had actually been committed.

(h) To cooperate with the State Forest Service by
reporting all forest fires.

(i) Upon request of the sheriff or his designee, or
board of supervisors of any county or the chief of police or mayor
of any municipality, and when so instructed by the commissioner or
his designee, to respond to calls for assistance in a law
enforcement incident; such request and action shall be noted and
clearly reflected on the radio logs of both the Mississippi
Highway Safety Patrol district substation and that of the
requesting agency, entered on the local NCIC terminal, if
available, and a request in writing shall follow within
forty-eight (48) hours. Additionally, the time of commencement
and termination of the specific law enforcement incident shall be clearly noted on the radio logs of both law enforcement agencies.

(2) The Legislature declares that the primary law enforcement officer in any county in the State of Mississippi is the duly qualified and elected sheriff thereof, but for the purposes of this subsection there is hereby vested in the Department of Public Safety, in addition to the powers hereinabove mentioned and the other provisions of this section under the terms and limitations hereinafter mentioned and for the purpose of insuring domestic tranquility and for the purpose of preventing or suppressing, or both, crimes of violence, acts and conduct calculated to, or which may, provoke or lead to violence and/or incite riots, mobs, mob violence, a breach of the peace, and acts of intimidation or terror, the powers and duties to include the enforcement of all the laws of the State of Mississippi relating to such purposes, to investigate any violation of the laws of the State of Mississippi and to aid in the arrest and prosecution of persons charged with violating the laws of the State of Mississippi which relate to such purposes. Investigators of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Public Safety shall have general police powers to enforce all the laws of the State of Mississippi. All officers of the Department of Public Safety charged with the enforcement of the laws administered by that agency, for the purposes herein set forth, shall have full power to investigate, prevent, apprehend and arrest law violators
anywhere in the state, and shall be vested with the power of
general police officers in the performance of their duties. The
officers of the Department of Public Safety are authorized and
empowered to carry and use firearms and other weapons deemed
necessary in the discharge of their duties as such and are also
empowered to serve warrants and subpoenas issued under the
authority of the State of Mississippi. The Governor shall be
authorized to offer and pay suitable rewards to persons aiding in
the investigation, apprehension and conviction of persons charged
with acts of violence, or threats of violence or intimidation or
acts of terrorism. The additional powers herein granted to or
vested in the Department of Public Safety or any of its officers
or employees by this section, excepting investigating powers, and
those powers of investigators who shall have general police power,
being the investigators in the Bureau of Investigation of the
Department of Public Safety, shall not be exercised by the
Department of Public Safety, or any of its officers or employees,
except upon authority and direction of the Governor or Acting
Governor, by proclamation duly signed, in the following instances,
to wit:

(a) When requested by the sheriff or board of
supervisors of any county or the mayor of any municipality on the
grounds that mob violence, crimes of violence, acts and conduct of
terrorism, riots or acts of intimidation, or either, calculated to
or which may provoke violence or incite riots, mobs, mob violence,
violence, or lead to any breach of the peace, or either, and acts of intimidation or terror are anticipated, and when such acts or conduct in the opinion of the Governor or Acting Governor would provoke violence or any of the foregoing acts or conduct set out in this subsection, and the sheriff or mayor, as the case may be, lacks adequate police force to prevent or suppress the same.

(b) Acting upon evidence submitted to him by the Department of Public Safety, or other investigating agency authorized by the Governor or Acting Governor to make such investigations, because of the failure or refusal of the sheriff of any county or mayor of any municipality to take action or employ such means at his disposal, to prevent or suppress the acts, conduct or offenses provided for in subsection (1) of this section, the Governor or Acting Governor deems it necessary to invoke the powers and authority vested in the Department of Public Safety.

(c) The Governor or Acting Governor is hereby authorized and empowered to issue his proclamation invoking the powers and authority vested by this paragraph, as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection, and when the Governor or Acting Governor issues said proclamation in accordance herewith, said proclamation shall become effective upon the signing thereof and shall continue in full force and effect for a period of ninety (90) days, or for a shorter period if otherwise ordered by the Governor or Acting Governor. At the signing of the
proclamation by the Governor or Acting Governor, the Department of Public Safety and its officers and employees shall thereupon be authorized to exercise the additional power and authority vested in them by this paragraph. The Governor and Acting Governor may issue additional proclamations for periods of ninety (90) days each under the authority of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection (2).

(3) All proclamations issued by the Governor or Acting Governor shall be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State on the next succeeding business day.

(4) It is not the intention of this section to vest the wide powers and authority herein provided for, as general powers of the Department of Public Safety, and the same are not hereby so vested, but to limit these general powers to cases and incidents wherein it is deemed necessary to prevent or suppress the offenses and conditions herein mentioned in this and other subsections of this section, and under the terms and conditions hereinabove enumerated, it being the sense of the Legislature that the prime duties of the Department of Public Safety are to patrol the highways of this state and enforce the highway safety laws.

(5) Patrol officers shall have no interest in any costs in the prosecution of any case through any court; nor shall any patrol officer receive any fee as a witness in any court held in this state, whether a state or federal court.
(6) Provided, however, that the general police power vested by virtue of the terms of subsection (2) of this section is solely for the purposes set out in said subsection.

SECTION 5. Section 25-31-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

25-31-21. If, at the time of impaneling the grand jury in any circuit court, the district attorney be absent or unable to perform his duties or, if after impaneling of the grand jury, the district attorney be absent or unable to perform his duties or be disqualified, the court shall forthwith appoint some attorney at law to act for the state in the place of the district attorney during his absence or inability or disqualification, and the person appointed shall have the power to discharge all the duties of the office during the absence or inability or disqualification of the district attorney, and shall receive a reasonable compensation for his services, to be allowed by the court and certified to the auditor, who shall issue his warrant therefor. Such allowance shall be deducted from the salary of the district attorney, and shall not exceed the amount of the salary of the district attorney for the number of days allotted by law for the term of the court at which such appointees shall act.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2020.