

By: Representative Currie

To: Tourism; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1291

1 AN ACT TO TRANSFER THE FUNCTIONS AND ASSETS OF THE
2 MISSISSIPPI BLUES COMMISSION TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT
3 AUTHORITY; TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI BLUES ADVISORY COMMISSION; TO
4 AMEND SECTIONS 39-27-1, 39-27-3 AND 57-1-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
5 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** From and after the July 1, 2020, the Mississippi
8 Development Authority shall be the Mississippi Blues Commission.
9 All funds or other assets of the Mississippi Blues Commission
10 shall be transferred to the Mississippi Development Authority on
11 that date. Any reference in law to the Mississippi Blues
12 Commission shall mean the Mississippi Development Authority. The
13 Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority shall
14 assign the functions of the Mississippi Blues Commission to any
15 organizational divisions or other units of the authority that the
16 Executive Director determines to be appropriate.

17 **SECTION 2.** Section 39-27-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
18 amended as follows:



19 39-27-1. (1) * * * The * * * Mississippi Development
20 Authority may accept and expend grants and private donations from
21 any source, including federal, state, public and private entities,
22 to assist it to carry out * * * the functions formerly vested in
23 the Mississippi Blues Commission set out in this chapter.

24 (2) For purposes of this chapter, the term "blues" shall
25 mean African-American roots music and the culture that created it.

26 (3) The powers, functions and duties of the * * *
27 Mississippi Development Authority shall include, but shall not be
28 limited to, the following:

29 (a) To study, deliberate and report to the Governor and
30 the Legislature on the best method or plan to market and foster an
31 appreciation of the blues, to include tourism, academic study and
32 blues archives, blues historical preservation, blues cultural
33 education and the support of performing artists. The marketing
34 plan shall be designed to attract tourists, conferences, music
35 performances, filmmakers and others for the purpose of economic
36 development of all geographic areas of the state, through the
37 promotion of the blues and the heritage and culture that produced
38 the blues, and to analyze the tourism potential of the blues for
39 Mississippi.

40 (b) To make an inventory of blues "assets" that make up
41 the blues and blues culture that could be developed into a program
42 for domestic and international tourism, and opportunities for
43 investment.



44 (c) To establish a statewide Mississippi "Blues Trail"
45 infrastructure to offer to tourists and targeted groups a
46 structured tour of Mississippi blues historical sites and
47 performance venues.

48 (d) To coordinate with the * * * Department of Archives
49 and History, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, the
50 Mississippi Educational Television Authority, the State
51 Institutions of Higher Learning, the Center for the Study of
52 Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, the University
53 Center for Economic Development at Mississippi Valley State
54 University, the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta
55 State University, the Delta Blues Museum, the Delta Music
56 Institute, the Mississippi Arts Commission and similar
57 organizations in the sharing of resources and information in order
58 to ensure a comprehensive approach to marketing the blues and
59 blues culture in Mississippi.

60 (e) To make recommendations regarding the establishment
61 of, and budgeting for, a permanent Mississippi Office of the Blues
62 as an agency of state government with an executive director and
63 appropriate staff to carry out the marketing plan developed by
64 the * * * Mississippi Development Authority. To the extent
65 practical, any office shall be located at an existing public or
66 private location which is appropriate to the blues or blues
67 culture in Mississippi, with minimal cost to the state.



68 (f) To coordinate the blues marketing plan with any
69 existing state historic preservation programs, in order to:

70 (i) Identify and preserve blues historic
71 properties or sites;

72 (ii) Determine the eligibility of those properties
73 or sites for listing on the National Register;

74 (iii) Prepare nominations of those properties or
75 sites for inclusion on the National Register;

76 (iv) Maintain blues historical and archaeological
77 data bases; and

78 (v) Evaluate those properties and sites for
79 eligibility for state and federal preservation incentives.

80 (g) To raise and expend grant funds to provide
81 assistance to any blues musicians in need.

82 (4) * * * There is created a Mississippi Blues Advisory
83 Commission to provide advice and guidance to the Mississippi
84 Development Authority on all matters provided for in this chapter.

85 The Mississippi Blues Advisory Commission shall be composed of the
86 following members:

87 * * *

88 (* * *a) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
89 Department of Archives and History, or his designee;

90 (* * *b) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
91 Arts Commission, or his designee;



92 (* * *c) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
93 Educational Television Authority, or his designee;

94 (* * *d) The Director of the Center for the Study of
95 Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi;

96 (* * *e) * * * A person designated by the President of
97 Mississippi Valley State University;

98 (* * *f) The Director of the Delta Center for Culture
99 and Learning at Delta State University;

100 (* * *g) The President of the B.B. King Museum and
101 Delta Interpretive Center;

102 (* * *h) The State Director of the USDA Rural
103 Development Agency;

104 (* * *i) Two (2) members of the Mississippi Senate
105 designated by the Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve on a
106 nonvoting basis;

107 (* * *j) Two (2) members of the Mississippi House of
108 Representatives designated by the Speaker of the House, who shall
109 serve on a nonvoting basis;

110 (* * *k) Two (2) members appointed by the Governor,
111 who shall have experience in cultural affairs or tourism
112 development in the Mississippi Delta; and

113 (* * *l) Four (4) members appointed by the Governor
114 from the state at large, who shall have demonstrated a commitment
115 to the understanding and promotion of the blues.



116 (5) * * * The Mississippi Development Authority shall
117 designate necessary staff to provide administrative and program
118 support to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

119 (6) Members of the * * * Mississippi Blues Advisory
120 Commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

121 * * *

122 (* * * 7) All departments, boards, agencies, officers and
123 institutions of the state, and all subdivisions thereof, shall
124 cooperate with the * * * Mississippi Development Authority in
125 carrying out its purposes under this chapter.

126 (* * * 8) Any funds or donations received by the * * *
127 Mississippi Development Authority shall be deposited into a
128 special fund which is created in the State Treasury. The fund
129 shall be maintained by the State Treasurer as a special fund,
130 separate and apart from the General Fund of the state. Unexpended
131 amounts remaining in the special fund at the end of a fiscal year
132 shall not lapse into the State General Fund, and any interest
133 earned or investment earnings on amounts in the fund shall be
134 deposited to the credit of the special fund.

135 Monies in the fund shall be expended by the Department of
136 Finance and Administration after receipt of requisitions submitted
137 by the appropriate person designated by the * * * Mississippi
138 Development Authority. Monies in the special fund may be used by
139 the * * * Mississippi Development Authority in carrying out its
140 responsibilities under this chapter.



141 **SECTION 3.** Section 39-27-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
142 amended as follows:

143 39-27-3. The * * * Mississippi Development Authority shall
144 designate specific sites for erection of appropriate "Mississippi
145 Blues Trail" markers to offer to tourists and targeted groups a
146 structured tour of Mississippi blues historical sites and
147 performance venues. The * * * Mississippi Development Authority
148 shall be authorized to purchase appropriate Mississippi Blues
149 Trail markers from any of its available funds. The texts for the
150 Mississippi Blues Trail markers shall be approved by the * * *
151 Mississippi Development Authority. The Mississippi Department of
152 Transportation shall cooperate with the * * * Mississippi
153 Development Authority by erecting and maintaining the markers that
154 have been approved by the * * * Mississippi Development Authority.

155 **SECTION 4.** Section 57-1-55, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
156 amended as follows:

157 57-1-55. (1) The * * * Mississippi Development Authority
158 shall have the following general powers and duties: To develop
159 and manage programs which enhance the climate for economic growth
160 through assistance to private sector businesses, local communities
161 and individuals, and through an extensive national and
162 international marketing effort.

163 (2) The * * * Mississippi Development Authority shall have
164 the following general powers and duties with respect to economic
165 development:



166 (a) To plan, supervise and direct an active program of
167 solicitation of industries to locate within the state;

168 (b) To prepare, maintain and disseminate information
169 which is needed by companies in evaluating site locations;

170 (c) To consult with, advise and assist prospective
171 industries wishing to locate within the state;

172 (d) To encourage new or expanding industries, which
173 will add to the economy, to locate within the state;

174 (e) To maintain a coordinated liaison function with
175 other development groups, including state and federal agencies,
176 and planning and development districts, utility companies,
177 chambers of commerce and railroads;

178 (f) To assist communities and counties within the state
179 in preparation for economic growth;

180 (g) To assist new and existing business and industry
181 and encourage their development and expansion;

182 (h) To plan and conduct a nationwide advertising
183 program promoting the state to prospective industry. Any contract
184 entered into for such purposes shall be advertised, bid and
185 accepted in accordance with the same procedure as prescribed for
186 the advertisement and acceptance of bids for the purchase of
187 commodities and contracts for public purchases under Chapter 7,
188 Title 31, Mississippi Code of 1972;

189 (i) To work with economic development agencies of the
190 federal government in areas of industrial development and provide



191 information to industrial prospects regarding the availability of
192 federal funds and assistance;

193 (j) To work with the Department of Corrections,
194 pursuant to the provisions of Section 47-5-501 et seq., in
195 identifying and evaluating acceptable industries and businesses
196 and in acting as an agent of the Department of Corrections by
197 communicating with such concerns and aggressively soliciting their
198 participation in the Correctional Industries Work Program;

199 (k) To perform related work as required;

200 (l) To disseminate information about financial and
201 other programs of the * * * Mississippi Development Authority that
202 will assist in the creation or expansion of industries processing
203 wood products in this state;

204 (m) To market processed and raw agricultural products
205 domestically and abroad;

206 (n) To aid in the establishment of business incubation
207 centers by private business interests, not for profit
208 corporations, and/or governmental entities. The department may
209 provide funds by contract for the establishment of business
210 incubation centers and may contract for space in which business
211 incubation centers will be located. Business incubation centers
212 are defined as facilities and support services that encourage the
213 establishment of successful small businesses by providing a
214 short-term sheltered environment. The department may solicit and
215 accept grants and other financial aid or support from private or



216 public sources to aid in the development of business incubation
217 centers. In addition, advice and assistance to established
218 business incubation centers may be provided by the department; and

219 (o) To employ licensed real estate brokers and
220 appraisers necessary for the industrial development of any real
221 estate under the ownership or control of the * * * Mississippi
222 Development Authority. Any contract entered into for such
223 purposes shall be advertised, bid and accepted in accordance with
224 the same procedure as prescribed for the advertisement and
225 acceptance of bids for the purchase of commodities and contracts
226 for public purchases under Chapter 7, Title 31, Mississippi Code
227 of 1972.

228 (p) To carry out the functions of the Mississippi Blues
229 Commission as provided in Section 1 of this act.

230 **SECTION 5.** Section 1 of this act shall be codified as a new
231 section in Chapter 27, Title 39, Mississippi Code of 1972.

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

