

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



July 8, 2020

TO THE MISSISSIPPI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR'S PARTIAL VETO MESSAGE FOR HOUSE BILL 1782

I am returning House Bill 1782: "AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FROM THE BUDGET CONTINGENCY FUND TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR THE PURPOSES OF ADDRESSING OR RELATED TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES," partly approved and partly not approved pursuant to the authority of Article VI, Section 73 of the Mississippi Constitution and assigning the following reasons for partial veto of this bill.

I am vetoing Lines 194-206 providing a \$2,000,000 appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds to the North Oak Regional Medical Center or its successor entities. The North Oak Regional Medical Center closed its doors long before the COVID-19 outbreak and, to date, has not provided any treatment to patients with COVID-19. Further, even if this facility was purchased and did resume operations prior to December 30, 2020, it is a virtual certainty that it would not have incurred \$2,000,000 in qualified reimbursable COVID-19 expenses. Thus, this appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds fundamentally does not comply with the mandatory guidelines issued by the United States Department of Treasury for the use of CARES Act funds.

I am also vetoing Lines 207-222 providing a \$6,000,000 appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds to the MAGnet Community Health Disparity Program. While I fully support improving health access, performance, outcomes and cost efficiencies for all Mississippians, including in minority communities, I am unaware of this Program. Due to my unfamiliarity, I am uncomfortable allocating \$6,000,000 in Federal CARES Act funds to it, funds that the State of Mississippi would be responsible to pay back to the United States Treasury if they are not spent in accordance with mandatory guidelines issued by the United States Department of Treasury. If it was the intent of the Legislature to allocate funds to Federally Qualified Health Centers, the State Department of Health would have been a more appropriate conduit.

For these reasons, I am vetoing the \$2,000,000 appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds to the North Oak Regional Medical Center and the \$6,000,000 appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds to the MAGnet Community Health Disparity Program contained in House Bill 1782 pursuant to the authority of Article VI, Section 73 of the Mississippi Constitution, which provides:

“The governor may veto parts of any appropriation bill, and approve parts of the same, and the portions shall be law.”

Respectfully submitted,


TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

July 8, 2020

9:15 P.M.