

By: Senator(s) Whaley

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 2486

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI STATE PARKS STUDY COMMITTEE  
2 TO EXAMINE AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE RESTRUCTURING OF  
3 OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS PERTAINING TO MISSISSIPPI'S  
4 STATE PARKS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby created the Mississippi  
7 State Parks Study Committee to examine and develop recommendations  
8 for the restructuring of ownership and management arrangements  
9 pertaining to Mississippi's state parks.

10 (2) The committee shall study, at a minimum, the following  
11 questions and report to the 2022 Regular Session of the  
12 Legislature the committee's recommendations:

13 (a) The implications of renewal versus nonrenewal of  
14 the state's leases with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the  
15 John W. Kyle, George P. Cossar, and Hugh White State Parks,  
16 including, but not limited to:

- 17 (i) The term of each lease;
- 18 (ii) Whether each lease may be renewed with the
- 19 right of assignment; and



20 (iii) The cost of renovating and maintaining the  
21 infrastructure and facilities built by the state at each park  
22 should the state renew one or more of the leases, compared with  
23 the cost of removing the same should the Corps demand it in the  
24 event of nonrenewal;

25 (b) Whether the following local governments would be  
26 willing and able to accept the following conveyances for the  
27 purpose of maintaining and operating them as county or municipal  
28 parks, and the best alternative for each park should the  
29 conveyance not be feasible:

30 (i) Great River Road State Park to Bolivar County  
31 or to the Town of Rosedale;

32 (ii) Florewood Park to the City of Greenwood or to  
33 Leflore County;

34 (iii) Tombigbee State Park to the City of Tupelo  
35 or to Lee County (and if the City of Tupelo will not accept the  
36 conveyance, whether it will execute a quitclaim deed for its  
37 reversionary interest in the park);

38 (iv) Lake Lowndes State Park to Lowndes County;

39 (v) Legion State Park to the City of Louisville or  
40 to Winston County; and

41 (vi) Paul B. Johnson State Park to the City of  
42 Hattiesburg or to Forrest County;



43 (c) The feasibility and desirability of repurposing the  
44 following state parks, and the best alternative for each park  
45 should the repurposing not be feasible or desirable:

46 (i) Lake Lincoln State Park, to be maintained and  
47 operated as a state fisheries lake; and

48 (ii) Natchez State Park, to be maintained and  
49 operated as a wildlife management area;

50 (d) The best management strategy for Clark Creek  
51 Natural Area; and

52 (e) The feasibility and desirability of leasing certain  
53 state parks to private companies for the purpose of maintaining  
54 and operating them for the recreational benefit of the public,  
55 including:

56 (i) A lease for a north Mississippi group to  
57 comprise Trace, J.P. Coleman, Tishomingo and Wall Doxey State  
58 Parks;

59 (ii) A lease for a central Mississippi group to  
60 comprise Golden Memorial, Roosevelt and Clarkco State Parks;

61 (iii) A lease for a south Mississippi group to  
62 comprise Percy Quinn and Buccaneer State Parks, and also possibly  
63 Paul B. Johnson State Park and Clark Creek Natural Area;

64 (iv) Admissions fees to be charged to the public;

65 (v) The revenue from the operation of the parks  
66 that should go to the state, and to which fund;



67 (vi) The revenue from the operation of the parks  
68 that should go to the lessees;

69 (vii) The process for selecting the lessees,  
70 including potential oversight of the leasing process by the Public  
71 Procurement Review Board (PPRB) or, alternatively, a statutory  
72 procedure for the development and dissemination of Requests for  
73 Proposals and the selection of a proposal; and

74 (viii) Obligations of a lessee to comply with any  
75 conditions attached to a park as the result of prior acceptance of  
76 federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants.

77 (3) The committee shall provide the provisions of the  
78 current Mississippi law that will need to be amended to adopt the  
79 measures described in this section and any other measures  
80 recommended by the committee.

81 (4) The committee shall be composed of five (5) members of  
82 the Mississippi State Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor  
83 and five (5) members of the Mississippi House of Representatives  
84 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

85 (5) Appointments to the study committee shall be made within  
86 thirty (30) days of the effective date of this act. At the first  
87 meeting, the committee shall elect from among its membership a  
88 chairman, a vice chairman and any other officers determined to be  
89 necessary, and shall adopt rules for transacting business and  
90 keeping records.



91 (6) A majority of the members of the study committee shall  
92 constitute a quorum. In the adoption of rules, resolutions and  
93 reports, and in the election of a chairman, vice chairman and any  
94 other officers determined to be necessary, an affirmative vote of  
95 a majority of the members present shall be required.

96 (7) The Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and the  
97 Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and  
98 Expenditure Review (PEER) shall provide the staff and other  
99 support necessary for the study committee to perform its duties.

100 (8) To effectuate the purposes of this act, any department,  
101 division, board, bureau, committee, institution or agency of the  
102 state, or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request  
103 of the chairman of the study committee, provide the facilities,  
104 assistance, information and data needed to enable the study  
105 committee to carry out its duties.

106 (9) Upon its report to the 2022 Regular Session of the  
107 Legislature, the study committee shall be dissolved.

108 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
109 and after its passage.

