

By: Representatives Currie, Stamps, Hobgood- To: Agriculture  
Wilkes, Crawford, Scoggin, Brown (20th),  
Williamson, Arnold

HOUSE BILL NO. 280  
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A STUDY COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
2 STUDYING THE PURCHASING, ACQUIRING, LEASING OR HOLDING AN INTEREST  
3 IN AGRICULTURAL LAND BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT; TO PROVIDE THE NINE  
4 MEMBERS OF THE STUDY COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE THE INFORMATION THAT  
5 THE STUDY COMMITTEE SHALL STUDY, TO REQUIRE A REPORT TO BE  
6 PROVIDED TO THE LEGISLATURE BY DECEMBER 1, 2023; AND FOR RELATED  
7 PURPOSES.

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

9 SECTION 1. (1) There is created a study committee for the  
10 purpose of studying the purchasing, acquiring, leasing or holding  
11 an interest in agricultural land by foreign government. The  
12 committee shall be comprised of the following nine (9) members:

13 (a) The Commissioner of Department of Agriculture and  
14 Commerce, or his or her designee;

15 (b) The Attorney General, or his or her designee;

16 (c) The Chairman of the House Judiciary B Committee;

17 (d) The Chairman of the Senate Judiciary B Committee;

18 (e) The Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee;

19 (f) The Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee;

20 (g) One (1) person to be appointed by the Governor;



21 (h) One (1) person to be appointed by the Lieutenant  
22 Governor; and

23 (i) One (1) person to be appointed by the Speaker of  
24 the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of  
25 Farm Bureau.

26 (2) Appointments to the study committee shall be made within  
27 thirty (30) days of the effective date of this act. At the first  
28 meeting, the committee shall elect from among its membership a  
29 chairman, a vice chairman and any other officers determined to be  
30 necessary, and shall adopt rules for transacting business and  
31 keeping records. The study committee shall develop and report its  
32 findings to the Legislature on or before December 1, 2023.

33 (3) A majority of the members of the study committee shall  
34 constitute a quorum. In the adoption of rules, resolutions and  
35 reports, and in the election of a chairman, vice chairman and any  
36 other officers determined to be necessary, an affirmative vote of  
37 a majority of the members present shall be required.

38 (4) To effectuate the purposes of this act, any department,  
39 division, board, bureau, committee, institution or agency of the  
40 state, or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request  
41 of the chairman of the study committee, provide the facilities,  
42 assistance, information and data needed to enable the study  
43 committee to carry out its duties.

44 (5) The study committee shall study at least the following  
45 information:



46 (a) The total amount of agricultural land that is under  
47 foreign ownership;

48 (b) The percentage change in foreign ownership of  
49 agricultural land in Mississippi, by year, over the past ten (10)  
50 years;

51 (c) The purpose to which foreign-owned agricultural  
52 land in Mississippi is being put to use currently, including any  
53 significant recent changes or trends in the use to which foreign-  
54 owned agricultural land in Mississippi is being put to use;

55 (d) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent  
56 changes in, foreign ownership of water rights in Mississippi;

57 (e) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent  
58 changes in, foreign ownership of water desalination facilities in  
59 Mississippi;

60 (f) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent  
61 changes in, foreign ownership of energy production, storage or  
62 distribution facilities in Mississippi;

63 (g) The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and  
64 Commerce's assessment of the impact of any recent changes in  
65 foreign ownership of agricultural land in Mississippi, water  
66 rights and food security;

67 (h) Any current prohibitions on the foreign ownership  
68 of Mississippi land and why such prohibitions are not being  
69 enforced; and



70                   (i) Any legislative, regulatory or administrative  
71 policy changes the department recommends in light of the  
72 information in the report.

73           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
74 and after July 1, 2023, and shall stand repealed on June 30, 2023.

