

By: Representatives Johnson, Hines, Harness, Porter, Clark To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 547

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE POSITION OF THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN
2 ACT (ARPA) EXPENDITURES OMBUDSMAN, WHO SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE
3 GOVERNOR FOR A TERM THAT EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2026; TO PROVIDE
4 THAT THE OMBUDSMAN SHALL OVERSEE ALL EXPENDITURES OF ARPA FUNDS
5 MADE BY THE LEGISLATURE, THE GOVERNOR AND ALL STATE AGENCIES AND
6 SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE ONGOING EXPENDITURE OF
7 ARPA FUNDS IN THE STATE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE OMBUDSMAN SHALL
8 PREPARE AN ANNUAL REPORT ON HOW ARPA FUNDS ARE BEING EXPENDED, WHO
9 THE FUNDS ARE HELPING, AND WHAT IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE IN THE
10 ALLOCATION OF THE FUNDS, AND THE REPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED TO THE
11 GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE AND SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE
12 PUBLIC; TO PROVIDE THAT THE ANNUAL COMPENSATION OF THE OMBUDSMAN
13 FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS OR HER DUTIES SHALL BE PAID FROM ARPA
14 FUNDS THAT ARE APPROPRIATED BY THE LEGISLATURE FOR THAT PURPOSE;
15 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

17 SECTION 1. (1) There is established the position of the
18 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Expenditures Ombudsman, who shall
19 be appointed by the Governor for a term that expires on December
20 31, 2026.

21 (2) The ombudsman shall oversee all expenditures of ARPA
22 funds made by the Legislature, the Governor and all state agencies
23 and solicit feedback from the public about the ongoing expenditure
24 of ARPA funds in the state.



25 (3) The ombudsman shall prepare an annual report on (a) how
26 ARPA funds are being expended, (b) who the funds are helping, and
27 (c) what improvements can be made in the allocation of the funds.
28 The report shall be provided to the Governor and the Legislature
29 and shall be made available to the public.

30 (4) The annual compensation of the ombudsman for the
31 performance of his or her duties shall be paid from ARPA funds
32 that are appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.

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

