

By: Representatives Harness, Gibbs (36th),  
Gibbs (72nd), Holloway (76th), Osborne,  
Paden, Mickens, Jackson (45th), Butler-  
Washington

To: Universities and  
Colleges

HOUSE BILL NO. 739

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY RESTORATION OF  
2 ADEQUATE FUNDING TO ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY; TO PRESCRIBE THE  
3 MEMBERSHIP AND SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE; TO REQUIRE THE  
4 TASK FORCE TO SUBMIT A REPORT OF ITS WORK AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO  
5 THE GOVERNOR, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR AND HOUSE SPEAKER BEFORE  
6 DECEMBER 31, 2024; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Task Force to Study  
9 Restoration of Adequate Funding to Alcorn State University. The  
10 task force shall consist of the following members:

11 (a) The President of Alcorn State University or the  
12 president's designee;

13 (b) A member of the Board of Trustees of State  
14 Institutions of Higher Learning appointed by the Commissioner of  
15 Higher Education;

16 (c) The Executive Director of the Joint Legislative  
17 Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER)  
18 or the director's designee;

19 (d) The State Auditor or the Auditor's designee;

20 (e) The State Treasurer or the Treasurer's designee;



21 (f) The Director of the Department of Archives and  
22 History or the director's designee;  
23 (g) A resident of the state appointed by the Governor;  
24 (h) A resident of the state appointed by the Lieutenant  
25 Governor; and  
26 (i) A resident of the state appointed by the Speaker of  
27 the House of Representatives.

28 (2) The task force shall research and study the following:

29 (a) Historical funding data for the state institutions  
30 of higher learning in Mississippi to determine the extent to which  
31 Alcorn State University may have been underfunded in comparison to  
32 other state institutions of higher learning, particularly the  
33 other land grant institution, Mississippi State University;

34 (b) The impact on students, faculty and the community  
35 served by Alcorn State University which resulted from any  
36 underfunding; and

37 (c) Opportunities for the state to make whole Alcorn  
38 State University by addressing any funding disparities in prior  
39 years by allocating additional state funding to the institution  
40 for such number of years determined to be appropriate by the task  
41 force.

42 Based upon the results of its research and study, the task  
43 force shall develop and make recommendations for a plan of action  
44 to remedy any underfunding of Alcorn State University in prior  
45 years and to secure ongoing parity in state funding with the



46 state's other institutions of higher learning, particularly the  
47 other land grant institution, Mississippi State University, in  
48 future years.

49 (3) All appointments to the task force must be made no later  
50 than September 1, 2024. After the members are appointed, the  
51 State Auditor shall set the date for an organizational meeting  
52 which is mutually acceptable to a majority of the task force  
53 members. At the organizational meeting, the task force shall  
54 elect a chair from the members designated under paragraphs (a)  
55 through (f) of subsection (1). A majority of the members of the  
56 task force constitutes a quorum at all task force meetings.

57 (4) Members of the task force shall serve without  
58 compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to the availability of  
59 funding, for mileage and actual and necessary expenses incurred in  
60 attending meetings of the task force pursuant to Section 25-3-41.

61 (5) The Department of Finance and Administration and the  
62 Legislative Budget Office shall provide administrative support to  
63 the task force.

64 (6) Before December 31, 2024, the task force shall prepare  
65 and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the  
66 Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House of  
67 Representatives.

68 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
69 and after July 1, 2024.

