

By: Representative Read

To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1706

1 AN ACT TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 27-104-321, MISSISSIPPI CODE
2 OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND,
3 FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO AMEND SECTION
4 27-104-323, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DIRECT THE STATE FISCAL
5 OFFICER TO TRANSFER TO THE CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND
6 THE FULL AMOUNT OF ANY INTEREST EARNED ON AMOUNTS IN THE
7 CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND THAT ARE REMAINING IN THE
8 LOCAL FUND ON JULY 1, 2024; TO PROVIDE THAT ANY INTEREST EARNED ON
9 AMOUNTS IN THE CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND AFTER JULY
10 1, 2024, SHALL BE DEPOSITED TO THE CREDIT OF THE CORONAVIRUS STATE
11 FISCAL RECOVERY FUND; TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE FISCAL OFFICER TO
12 TRANSFER TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANY FUNDS IN THE CORONAVIRUS
13 LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND THAT HAVE NOT BEEN USED FOR THE PURPOSE
14 FOR WHICH THEY WERE RECEIVED; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 27-104-325,
15 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE CORONAVIRUS STATE
16 FISCAL RECOVERY LOST REVENUE FUND, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE
17 AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-57, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
18 1972, WHICH ESTABLISHED THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI WORKFORCE
19 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO
20 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-205, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH
21 ESTABLISHED THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI NURSING/ALLIED HEALTH GRANT
22 PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD
23 SECTION 37-153-207, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH ESTABLISHED
24 THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI PHYSICIAN RESIDENCY AND FELLOWSHIP
25 START-UP GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO
26 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-209, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH
27 ESTABLISHED THE MISSISSIPPI ALLIED HEALTH COLLEGE AND CAREER
28 NAVIGATOR GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO
29 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-106-64, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH
30 ESTABLISHED THE SKILLED NURSING HOME AND HOSPITAL NURSES RETENTION
31 LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO
32 AMEND SECTION 41-3-16.1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT
33 FOR THE SECOND ROUND OF GRANT AWARDS UNDER THE ARPA RURAL WATER
34 ASSOCIATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF



35 HEALTH SHALL ADD TEN POINTS TO ANY GRANT APPLICATION THAT PROMOTES
36 THE CONSOLIDATION OF SEPARATE SYSTEMS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
37 DEPARTMENT SHALL ADD TEN POINTS TO ANY APPLICATION WITH AT LEAST
38 ONE SYSTEM THAT HAS CONSOLIDATED IN THE PAST, REGARDLESS OF
39 WHETHER THE APPLICATION WOULD RESULT IN ADDITIONAL CONSOLIDATION
40 IN THE FUTURE; TO PROVIDE THAT NO APPLICATION WILL RECEIVE MORE
41 THAN A TOTAL OF TEN ADDITIONAL POINTS UNDER THE PROGRAM FOR ANY
42 PAST OR FUTURE CONSOLIDATION OF SYSTEMS; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION
43 41-9-371, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE MISSISSIPPI
44 HOSPITAL SUSTAINABILITY GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE
45 AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 49-2-131, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
46 1972, WHICH CREATED THE MISSISSIPPI MUNICIPALITY AND COUNTY WATER
47 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE
48 AMENDMENT; TO PROVIDE FOR THE TRANSFER OF CERTAIN FUNDS BY THE
49 STATE TREASURER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

51 **SECTION 1.** Section 27-104-321, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
52 brought forward as follows:

53 27-104-321. (1) All funds received by or on behalf of the
54 State of Mississippi through the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery
55 Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
56 (Public Law No. 117-2) shall be deposited into the Coronavirus
57 State Fiscal Recovery Fund created in subsection (2) of this
58 section.

59 (2) There is created in the State Treasury a special fund to
60 be designated as the "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund."
61 The special fund shall consist of funds required to be deposited
62 into the special fund by subsection (1) of this section, funds
63 appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legislature in any
64 manner, and funds from any other source designated for deposit
65 into the special fund. Monies in the fund shall only be spent
66 upon appropriation by the Legislature and shall only be used as
67 provided in the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section



68 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No.
69 117-2) or as authorized by federal rule or regulation or
70 guidelines.

71 (3) Unexpended amounts remaining in the special fund at the
72 end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund
73 but shall remain in the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund.
74 Any investment earnings or interest earned on amounts in the
75 special fund shall be deposited to the credit of the special fund.

76 **SECTION 2.** Section 27-104-323, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
77 amended as follows:

78 27-104-323. (1) All funds received by or on behalf of the
79 State of Mississippi through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery
80 Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
81 (Public Law No. 117-2) for distribution to nonentitlement units of
82 local government shall be deposited into the Coronavirus Local
83 Fiscal Recovery Fund created in subsection (2) of this section.

84 (2) There is created in the State Treasury a special fund to
85 be designated as the "Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund" to
86 be administered by the Department of Finance and Administration.
87 The special fund shall consist of funds required to be deposited
88 into the special fund by subsection (1) of this section, funds
89 appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legislature in any
90 manner, and funds from any other source designated for deposit
91 into the special fund. The Department of Finance and
92 Administration shall distribute the funds to the nonentitlement



93 units of local government in accordance with the Coronavirus Local
94 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan
95 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2) and any applicable federal
96 guidelines. Such funds shall only be used as provided in the
97 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the
98 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2) or as
99 authorized by federal rule or regulation or guidelines.

100 (3) Unexpended amounts remaining in the special fund at the
101 end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund
102 but shall remain in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.
103 The State Fiscal Officer shall transfer to the Coronavirus State
104 Fiscal Recovery Fund the full amount of any investment earnings or
105 interest earned on amounts in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal
106 Recovery Fund that are remaining in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal
107 Recovery Fund on July 1, 2024. Any investment earnings or
108 interest earned on amounts in the * * * Coronavirus Local Fiscal
109 Recovery Fund after July 1, 2024, shall be deposited to the credit
110 of the * * * Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund created in
111 Section 27-104-321.

112 (4) The State Fiscal Officer is authorized, in his or her
113 discretion, to transfer to the federal government any funds in the
114 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund that have not been used for
115 the purpose for which they were received.

116 (5) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.



117 **SECTION 3.** Section 27-104-325, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
118 brought forward as follows:

119 27-104-325. There is created in the State Treasury a special
120 fund to be designated as the "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery
121 Lost Revenue Fund," which shall consist of funds calculated based
122 on a reduction in the state's general revenue due to the
123 coronavirus public health emergency, made available through the
124 Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund established by the American
125 Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and transferred into the fund by act of
126 the Legislature. The fund shall be maintained by the State
127 Treasurer as a separate and special fund, separate and apart from
128 the General Fund of the state. Unexpended amounts remaining in
129 the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the
130 State General Fund, and any investment earnings or interest earned
131 on amounts in the fund shall be deposited to the credit of the
132 fund. Monies in the fund shall be used by the Department of
133 Finance and Administration, upon appropriation by the Legislature,
134 for the purpose of providing government services.

135 **SECTION 4.** Section 37-153-57, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
136 brought forward as follows:

137 37-153-57. (1) There is established the Accelerate
138 Mississippi Workforce Development Program, which shall be directed
139 by the office for the purpose of providing education and training
140 to citizens seeking employment in high-wage, high-demand
141 industries in the state, including, but not limited to, the



142 nursing and healthcare fields, which were impacted by the
143 disruption to the economy and workforce caused by COVID-19. This
144 program shall be subject to the availability of funds appropriated
145 by the Legislature using Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds
146 made available under ARPA or any other funds appropriated by the
147 Legislature.

148 (2) As used in this section, the following words have the
149 meanings ascribed unless the context requires otherwise:

150 (a) "Recipient" means a community college, institution
151 of higher learning, or trainee recipient of grant funding under
152 this section.

153 (b) "Trainee" means an individual receiving training or
154 other services through programs under this article with the goal
155 of becoming employed in a high-wage, high-demand industry.

156 (c) "High-wage, high-demand industry" means those
157 industries paying above Mississippi's median annual income and
158 prioritized by the office and the four (4) local workforce areas.

159 (d) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a
160 recipient, pursuant to this article, to include:

- 161 (i) Necessary equipment or other supplies;
162 (ii) Curricula or other academic or training
163 materials;
164 (iii) Remote learning or other classroom
165 technology;



166 (iv) Stipends for teaching staff or faculty for
167 workforce development programs;

168 (v) Trainee support, including tuition expenses
169 and childcare or transportation assistance;

170 (vi) Coaching or mentoring services;

171 (vii) Job placement services;

172 (viii) Apprenticeship programs; and

173 (ix) Recruitment programs.

174 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as
175 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

176 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations
177 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an
178 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

179 (a) A detailed explanation of the program the applicant
180 intends to use awarded funds to create or expand, including:

181 (i) A description of the high-wage, high-demand
182 field or workforce shortage area the program is intended to
183 address;

184 (ii) The number of trainees who will be served by
185 the program; and

186 (iii) The average wage rate for trainees receiving
187 employment after completing the program;

188 (b) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be
189 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to
190 the office throughout the funding commitment;



191 (c) A plan to provide data on participation and
192 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to
193 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

194 (d) Other relevant information as determined
195 appropriate by the office.

196 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal
197 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief
198 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as
199 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the
200 approved program will be prioritized for approval.

201 (6) The office shall:

202 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds
203 appropriated to the grant program;

204 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the
205 administration of the grant program;

206 (c) Prioritize high-wage, high-skill industries,
207 including, but not limited to, nursing jobs or other jobs within
208 the healthcare field; and

209 (d) Coordinate with the Department of Employment
210 Security to share information to identify individuals who were
211 furloughed, unemployed, underemployed or otherwise displaced due
212 to COVID-19.

213 (7) The office may use a maximum of two percent (2%) of
214 funds allocated for this article for the administration of the
215 grant program, to the extent permissible under federal law.



216 **SECTION 5.** Section 37-153-205, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
217 brought forward as follows:

218 37-153-205. (1) There is established the Accelerate
219 Mississippi Nursing/Allied Health Grant Program, which shall be
220 directed by the office for the purpose of increasing capacity in
221 nursing and allied health training programs, including accredited
222 paramedic programs, job sectors which were severely impacted by
223 the disruption to the economy and workforce caused by COVID-19.

224 (2) For purposes of this section, the following words shall
225 have the meanings ascribed herein unless the context requires
226 otherwise:

227 (a) "Grant program" means the program established in
228 this section, which provides funding, as determined by the office,
229 from federal COVID-19 relief funds to sustain and increase
230 capacity in nursing and allied health education and training
231 programs, including accredited paramedic programs, or to help
232 retain and graduate nursing and allied health students, at
233 community and junior colleges or other entities facilitating
234 healthcare-focused training programs as determined by the office.

235 (b) "Recipient" means a community or junior college or
236 other entities facilitating healthcare-focused training programs
237 as determined by the office.

238 (c) "Trainee" means an individual receiving training or
239 other services through the grant program under this article with



240 the goal of becoming employed in the nursing or allied health
241 field, including as a licensed paramedic.

242 (d) "COVID-19" means the Coronavirus Disease 2019.

243 (e) "Federal COVID-19 relief funds" means funds
244 allocated to the State of Mississippi from the Coronavirus State
245 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan
246 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2).

247 (f) "High-wage, high-demand industry" means those
248 nursing or allied health jobs, including paramedics, paying above
249 Mississippi's median annual income and prioritized by the office.

250 (g) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a
251 recipient under this article, to include:

252 (i) Necessary equipment or other supplies to
253 sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied health training
254 programs, including accredited paramedic programs;

255 (ii) Necessary infrastructure, including building
256 renovation or construction, for increasing capacity in nursing or
257 allied health training programs, including accredited paramedic
258 programs;

259 (iii) Curricula or other academic or training
260 materials to sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied
261 health training programs, including accredited paramedic programs;

262 (iv) Remote learning or other classroom technology
263 to sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied health
264 training programs, including accredited paramedic programs;



265 (v) Job placement services for nursing or allied
266 health students and graduates, including those in accredited
267 paramedic programs;

268 (vi) Recruitment programs for nursing or allied
269 health students and graduates, including those in accredited
270 paramedic programs;

271 (vii) Other services aimed at helping retain and
272 graduate current nursing and allied health students, including
273 those in accredited paramedic programs.

274 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as
275 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

276 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations
277 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an
278 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

279 (a) A detailed explanation of the program the applicant
280 intends to use awarded funds to create or expand, to include:

281 (i) A description of the nursing or allied health
282 workforce shortage the program is intended to address, including
283 specific information from hospitals, clinics, long-term care
284 facilities or other health care providers in the region;

285 (ii) Any relevant waitlist or other information
286 demonstrating high demand for graduates from the relevant nursing
287 or allied health program;

288 (iii) The number of nursing or allied health
289 students who will be served by the program; and



290 (iv) The average wage rate for nursing or allied
291 health students receiving employment after completing the program;

292 (b) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be
293 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to
294 the office throughout the funding commitment;

295 (c) A plan to provide data on participation and
296 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to
297 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

298 (d) Other relevant information as determined
299 appropriate by the office.

300 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal
301 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief
302 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as
303 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the
304 approved program will be prioritized for approval.

305 (6) The office shall:

306 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds
307 appropriated to the grant program;

308 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the
309 administration of the grant program;

310 (c) Prioritize jobs within the nursing or allied health
311 fields which are currently experiencing staffing shortages in
312 hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities and other health
313 care providers across the state; and



314 (d) Prioritize jobs which are high-wage, high-demand
315 jobs within the nursing and allied health fields, including the
316 paramedic field.

317 (7) Seventy-five percent (75%) of the funds provided through
318 the appropriations process for this program shall be reserved for
319 community and junior colleges. A maximum of twenty-five percent
320 (25%) of the funds provided through the appropriations process for
321 this program may be awarded to recipients other than a community
322 or junior college which facilitate healthcare-focused training
323 programs as determined by the office.

324 **SECTION 6.** Section 37-153-207, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
325 brought forward as follows:

326 37-153-207. (1) There is established the Accelerate
327 Mississippi Physician Residency and Fellowship Start-Up Grant
328 Program, which shall be directed by the office for the purpose of
329 creating new or increasing capacity in existing physician
330 residency and fellowship programs in hospitals, which were
331 severely impacted by the disruption to the economy and workforce
332 caused by COVID-19.

333 (2) For purposes of this section, the following words shall
334 have the meanings ascribed herein unless the context requires
335 otherwise:

336 (a) "Grant program" means the program established in
337 this section, which provides funding, as determined by the office,
338 from federal COVID-19 relief funds to create new or increase



339 capacity in existing physician residency and fellowship programs
340 at general acute care hospitals in the State of Mississippi which
341 are licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

342 (b) "Recipient" means a general acute care hospital in
343 the State of Mississippi which is licensed by the Mississippi
344 State Department of Health.

345 (c) "Residency and fellowship programs" means advanced
346 training programs in medical or surgical specialty areas which are
347 accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical
348 Education or a similar accreditation body.

349 (d) "COVID-19" means the Coronavirus Disease 2019.

350 (e) "Federal COVID-19 relief funds" means funds
351 allocated to the State of Mississippi from the Coronavirus State
352 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan
353 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2).

354 (f) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a
355 recipient, pursuant to this article, to include:

356 (i) Equipment or other supplies necessary for
357 accreditation;

358 (ii) Necessary infrastructure, including building,
359 renovation or construction, for accreditation;

360 (iii) Curricula or other academic or training
361 materials necessary for accreditation;

362 (iv) Stipends for the recruitment, hiring and
363 development of program directors, program coordinators, faculty



364 and/or teaching staff and clinic staff necessary for
365 accreditation; and

366 (v) Remote learning or other classroom technology.

367 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as
368 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

369 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations
370 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an
371 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

372 (a) Evidence that the applicant is in the process of
373 preparing for accreditation, has applied for accreditation or has
374 received accreditation for a new residency or fellowship program,
375 or increased capacity in an existing residency or fellowship
376 program;

377 (b) A detailed explanation of the residency or
378 fellowship program the applicant intends to use awarded funds to
379 create or expand, to include:

380 (i) A description of the workforce shortage the
381 residency or fellowship program is intended to address, including
382 specific information from health care providers in the region;

383 (ii) Any relevant waitlist or other information
384 demonstrating high demand for medical school graduates to enter
385 the residency or fellowship program;

386 (iii) The number of residents who will be served
387 by the residency or fellowship program;



388 (iv) The budget for the residency or fellowship
389 program, including a plan showing sustainability after
390 accreditation and any required federal approval of the program;
391 and

392 (v) The average wage rate for residents or fellows
393 receiving employment after completing the program;

394 (c) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be
395 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to
396 the office throughout the funding commitment;

397 (d) A plan to provide data on participation and
398 outcomes of the residency or fellowship program, including a plan
399 to report outcomes to the office throughout the funding
400 commitment; and

401 (e) Other relevant information as determined
402 appropriate by the office.

403 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal
404 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief
405 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as
406 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the
407 approved program shall be prioritized for approval.

408 (6) The office shall:

409 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds
410 appropriated to the grant program;

411 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the
412 administration of the grant program;



413 (c) Prioritize residency or fellowship programs within
414 medical or surgical specialties which are currently experiencing
415 staffing shortages in hospitals, clinics, long-term care
416 facilities and other health care providers across the state;

417 (d) Prioritize residency or fellowship programs which
418 produce graduates in high-demand medical and surgical fields;

419 (e) Establish a schedule of application deadlines and a
420 system for considering applications on a rotating basis; and

421 (f) Ensure that every effort be made, in accordance
422 with the priorities in this subsection, to provide funds for the
423 placement of one (1) resident with each recipient before
424 considering awarding funds for the placement of additional
425 residents in the same round of consideration.

426 **SECTION 7.** Section 37-153-209, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
427 brought forward as follows:

428 37-153-209. (1) There is established the Mississippi Allied
429 Health College and Career Navigator Grant Program, which shall be
430 directed by the office for the purpose of hiring professionals, or
431 navigators, to provide individual assistance and guidance to
432 students to assist them in many areas, from maneuvering challenges
433 while enrolled in college programs and understanding the job
434 market to working through course challenges, and to help retain
435 and graduate nursing and allied health students, at community and
436 junior colleges. Such navigators must be at least a registered
437 nurse with at least two (2) years of experience in nursing. The



438 grant program shall be funded from monies appropriated by the
439 Legislature for that purpose.

440 (2) The office shall prescribe the terms and conditions of
441 the grant program. To be eligible to receive a grant from the
442 office under the grant program, a community college shall provide
443 the following information:

444 (a) The number of nursing or allied health students who
445 will be served by the program;

446 (b) A plan to provide data on participation and
447 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to
448 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

449 (c) Any other information that the office determines is
450 necessary.

451 **SECTION 8.** Section 37-106-64, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
452 brought forward as follows:

453 37-106-64. (1) There is established the "Skilled Nursing
454 Home and Hospital Nurses Retention Loan Repayment Program" for new
455 nursing graduates to be administered by the Mississippi
456 Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board.

457 (2) Subject to the availability of funds, an eligible
458 applicant for an initial award must have:

459 (a) Legal residency in the State of Mississippi;

460 (b) Gained employment within the last year for the
461 first time as a full-time licensed practical nurse or licensed
462 registered nurse at a skilled nursing home in the State of



463 Mississippi or a general acute care hospital in the State of
464 Mississippi that is licensed by the Mississippi State Department
465 of Health;

466 (c) A current relevant Mississippi professional
467 license; and

468 (d) Outstanding qualifying educational loans, received
469 at any point during the recipients postsecondary education career,
470 which may include the principal, interest and related expenses
471 such as the required interest premium on the unpaid balances of
472 government and commercial loans obtained by the recipient for
473 educational expense.

474 (3) Persons who have received funds from state-forgivable
475 loan programs established under Mississippi law, or who are in
476 default or delinquent on any federal, state, local or commercial
477 qualifying educational loan, shall not be eligible for this
478 program.

479 (4) Recipients in the program shall be selected on a
480 first-come, first-served basis from all eligible applicants. The
481 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board
482 shall renew eligible applicants approved in prior years only if
483 the renewal applicant continues to meet the standards set forth in
484 this act, and the renewal applicant has not received full funding
485 provided by this subsection (4).

486 (5) Awards for recipients who are employed at a skilled
487 nursing home or a licensed general acute care hospital in the



488 state may be a maximum of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000.00) for
489 each year of employment up to three (3) years.

490 (6) A recipient shall not be penalized for ending employment
491 at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute care
492 hospital in the State of Mississippi if the recipient begins
493 working for another skilled nursing home or licensed general acute
494 care hospital in the State of Mississippi during the year on which
495 the award is based.

496 (7) Awards shall be granted on a year-to-year basis, and
497 recipients have no obligation to seek a subsequent award.

498 (8) Awards shall be paid annually, after the expiration of
499 the year of employment for which the award was granted, to the
500 recipient's lender or loan service provider, to be applied to the
501 outstanding balance. Monies paid by the recipient or on the
502 recipient's behalf toward qualifying educational loans before
503 payment of the award shall not be eligible for reimbursement
504 through the program.

505 (9) During the employment year for which the award is
506 granted, a recipient shall at all times keep the State Financial
507 Aid Board informed of any changes to the recipient's current,
508 correct and complete employment information and status.

509 (10) Recipients who fail to maintain a relevant Mississippi
510 professional license or fail to fulfill the year of employment on
511 which the award was based forfeit any right to the award.



512 (11) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
513 Assistance Board, in collaboration with the State Board of Nursing
514 and any other applicable state agency as determined by the
515 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board,
516 shall attempt to track award recipients under this program through
517 their third employment year, unless the recipient leaves
518 employment at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute
519 care hospital in the state at an earlier date. Data collected
520 shall include each recipients' place of employment and any other
521 pertinent information necessary to determine the efficacy of the
522 program in retaining nurses in skilled nursing homes or licensed
523 general acute care hospitals in the State of Mississippi.

524 (12) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
525 Assistance Board shall promulgate regulations necessary for the
526 proper administration of this section, including setting a fiscal
527 year policy for the program and application dates and deadlines.

528 (13) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2027.

529 **SECTION 9.** Section 41-3-16.1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
530 amended as follows:

531 41-3-16.1. (1) (a) The State Department of Health
532 (department) shall establish a grant program to be known as the
533 ARPA Rural Water Associations Infrastructure Grant Program
534 (program) to assist rural water associations and entities in the
535 construction of eligible drinking water infrastructure projects as
536 provided in the Final Rule for the Coronavirus State and Local



537 Fiscal Recovery Funds as established by the federal American
538 Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

539 (b) Rural water associations and any entity that
540 received funding under the ARPA Rural Water Associations
541 Infrastructure Grant Program or the Mississippi Municipality and
542 County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program before April 14,
543 2023, shall be ineligible for additional grants under this
544 section.

545 (2) The program shall be funded from appropriations by the
546 Legislature to the department from the Coronavirus State Fiscal
547 Recovery Fund, and the department shall expend all such funds for
548 the purposes provided in subsection (1) of this section.

549 (3) The department shall obligate the funds by the deadline
550 set by the rules and guidelines of the United States Department of
551 the Treasury and will adhere to the Treasury's rules and
552 guidelines for reporting and monitoring projects funded through
553 ARPA.

554 (4) (a) The department shall develop a system for use in
555 ranking the grant applications received. The ranking system shall
556 include the following factors, at a minimum: (a) the
557 environmental impact of the proposed project; (b) the proposed
558 project's ability to address noncompliance with state/federal
559 requirements; (c) the extent to which the project promotes
560 economic development; (d) the number of people served by the
561 project (both new and existing users); (e) impacts of the proposed



562 project on disadvantaged/ overburdened communities; (f) the grant
563 applicant's prior efforts to secure funding to address the
564 proposed project's objectives; (g) the grant applicant's proposed
565 contribution of other funds or in-kind cost-sharing to the
566 proposed project; (h) the grant applicant's long-term plans for
567 the financial and physical operation and maintenance of the
568 project; and (i) the grant applicant's capacity to initiate
569 construction in a timely manner and complete the proposed project
570 by the deadline specified by rules and guidelines of the United
571 States Department of the Treasury for ARPA funds.

572 (b) For the second round of grant awards, subject to
573 the provisions of paragraph (d) of this subsection, the department
574 shall * * * add ten (10) points to any grant * * * application
575 that promotes the consolidation of separate systems. In order to
576 receive the additional * * * ten (10) points, the systems that
577 will consolidate shall be in a proximity of each other as
578 determined by the department.

579 (c) * * * For the second round of grant awards, subject
580 to the provisions of paragraph (d) of this subsection, the
581 department shall add ten (10) points * * * to any application with
582 at least one (1) system that has consolidated after January 1,
583 2018, and before application to this program and is otherwise
584 eligible under this section, regardless of whether the application
585 would result in additional consolidation in the future.



586 (d) If an application has received an additional ten
587 (10) points under paragraph (b), it shall not receive any
588 additional points under paragraph (c); and if an application has
589 received an additional ten (10) points under paragraph (c), it
590 shall not receive any additional points under paragraph (b). No
591 application will receive more than a total of ten (10) additional
592 points under this subsection for any past or future consolidation
593 of systems.

594 (5) An application for a grant under this section shall be
595 submitted at such time, be in such form, and contain such
596 information as the department prescribes.

597 (6) (a) Upon the approval of an application for a grant
598 under this section, the department shall enter into a project
599 grant agreement with each grantee to establish the terms of the
600 grant for the project, including the amount of the grant.

601 (b) (i) For the first award of grants, the maximum
602 amount of funds that may be provided to any rural water
603 association or entity from all grants under the program is Two
604 Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000.00).

605 (ii) For the second round of grant awards, the
606 maximum amount of funds that may be provided to any eligible
607 association or entity from all grants under the program is Two
608 Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00).

609 (c) Associations or entities that received funding
610 under the first round of grant awards for this program or received



611 funding in the Mississippi Municipality and County Water
612 Infrastructure Grant Program Act of 2022 are ineligible to receive
613 funding under the second round.

614 (7) The department shall have all powers necessary to
615 implement and administer the program. Of the funds appropriated
616 to the department for the program, not more than five percent (5%)
617 may be used by the department to cover the department's costs of
618 administering the program.

619 (8) In carrying out its responsibilities under the program,
620 for any contract under the purview of the Public Procurement
621 Review Board (PPRB), the department shall be exempt from any
622 requirement that the PPRB approve any personal or professional
623 services contracts or pre-approve any solicitation of such
624 contracts. This subsection shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.

625 (9) The department shall submit an annual report regarding
626 the program no later than December 31 of each year to the
627 Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Chairmen of
628 the Senate and House Appropriations Committees.

629 (10) For the purposes of this section, "entity" means:

630 (a) Any entity operating as a rural water association,
631 regardless of whether such entities were user created, were
632 initially organized not for profit, or have been granted
633 tax-exempt status under state or federal law.

634 (b) Any nonprofit water or sewer provider not owned by
635 the municipality or county and are not a Rural Water Association.



636 (c) Any entity eligible under this program shall be
637 currently operating as a not-for-profit entity.

638 (d) "Entity" under this subsection does not include any
639 state agency. No state agency shall be eligible under this
640 program.

641 **SECTION 10.** Section 41-9-371, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
642 brought forward as follows:

643 41-9-371. (1) There is established the Mississippi Hospital
644 Sustainability Grant Program which shall be administered by the
645 State Department of Health.

646 (2) In order to strengthen, improve and preserve access to
647 Mississippi hospital care services for all Mississippians and in
648 recognition of the challenges incurred by Mississippi hospitals as
649 a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, funds from the program shall be
650 distributed, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to each
651 hospital licensed by the State of Mississippi, except for
652 hospitals operated by the United States Department of Veterans
653 Affairs and hospitals operated by the State Department of Mental
654 Health. Licensed specialty hospitals that are recognized as such
655 by the State Department of Health, except for those excluded under
656 this subsection, are eligible for grants under the program.

657 (3) The department shall distribute grants to each eligible
658 hospital based upon the following formula:

659 (a) Each hospital that has fewer than one hundred (100)
660 licensed beds and that is not classified as a critical access



661 hospital that operates an emergency department shall be eligible
662 to receive Six Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$625,000.00)
663 to defray the costs of providing emergency department services.

664 (b) Each rural hospital that has fewer than one hundred
665 (100) licensed beds and that is classified as a critical access
666 hospital that operates an emergency department shall be eligible
667 to receive Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) to defray
668 the costs of providing emergency department services.

669 (c) Each hospital that operates an emergency department
670 and that has more than one hundred (100) licensed beds shall be
671 eligible to receive One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00).

672 (d) Each hospital with fewer than two hundred (200)
673 licensed beds with the majority of such beds being dedicated to
674 providing specialty services such as women's health services,
675 long-term acute care, rehabilitation or psychiatric services shall
676 be eligible to receive Five Hundred Thousand Dollars
677 (\$500,000.00).

678 (e) Each rural hospital with fewer than one hundred
679 (100) licensed beds with no emergency department shall be eligible
680 to receive Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) to defray
681 the costs of providing access to hospital care in rural
682 communities.

683 (f) In addition to the funds provided in paragraphs (a)
684 through (e) of this subsection, each small rural hospital with
685 fifty (50) beds or less which operated an emergency department



686 shall be eligible to receive Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars
687 (\$250,000.00) to defray the costs of providing access to hospital
688 care in rural communities.

689 (g) In addition to the funds distributed in paragraphs
690 (a) through (c) and (e) through (f) of this subsection, any
691 remaining funds appropriated for the purposes of this grant
692 program shall be distributed to hospitals receiving funds in
693 paragraphs (a) through (c) and (e) through (f) of this subsection
694 on a pro rata amount by dividing the total amount of the remaining
695 funds by the number of licensed beds attributable to all licensed
696 Mississippi hospitals except for licensed beds attributable to
697 hospitals described in paragraph (d) of this subsection and for
698 licensed beds attributable to hospitals operated by the United
699 States Department of Veterans Affairs and hospitals operated by
700 the State Department of Mental Health and determining a dollar
701 amount for each bed, and then multiplying that dollar amount by
702 the number of licensed beds of that hospital.

703 (4) The department shall adopt such reasonable rules as
704 necessary for the administration of the program, but shall not
705 place additional qualification requirements on hospitals other
706 than the minimum requirements in this section.

707 (5) The Mississippi Hospital Association shall form a work
708 group to review the delivery of hospital services in Mississippi
709 and shall make recommendations regarding the changes needed to
710 sustain access to hospital care to the Lieutenant Governor,



711 Speaker of the House, Chairmen of the House and Senate Public
712 Health Committees with copies to the Governor and the State Health
713 Officer.

714 **SECTION 11.** Section 49-2-131, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
715 brought forward as follows:

716 49-2-131. (1) This section shall be known and may be cited
717 as the "Mississippi Municipality and County Water Infrastructure
718 Grant Program Act of 2022."

719 (2) There is hereby established within the Mississippi
720 Department of Environmental Quality the Mississippi Municipality
721 and County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program under which
722 municipalities, counties and certain public utilities not
723 regulated by the Public Service Commission may apply until
724 February 1, 2023, for reimbursable grants to make necessary
725 investments in water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to
726 be funded by the Legislature utilizing Coronavirus State Fiscal
727 Recovery Funds made available under the federal American Rescue
728 Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Such grants shall be made available to
729 municipalities and counties to be matched with the Coronavirus
730 Local Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded or to be awarded to them under
731 ARPA on a one-to-one matching basis. Coronavirus Local Fiscal
732 Recovery Funds that a county transfers to a municipality or that a
733 county or municipality transfers to a public utility not regulated
734 by the Public Service Commission are eligible on a one-to-one
735 matching basis. Municipalities that received less than One



736 Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in the total allocation of
737 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are eligible for a
738 two-to-one match only on the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery
739 Funds awarded or to be awarded to them under ARPA. The
740 Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality shall only accept
741 two (2) rounds of submissions under the Mississippi Municipality
742 and County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program. The second
743 round of submissions shall be the final round. The dollar amount
744 for professional fees that can be allocated as a part of a
745 county's, municipality's or public utility's matching share is not
746 to exceed four percent (4%) of the total project cost.

747 (3) For purposes of this section, unless the context
748 requires otherwise, the following terms shall have the meanings
749 ascribed herein:

750 (a) "MCWI Grant Program" means the Mississippi
751 Municipality and County Water Infrastructure Grant Program.

752 (b) "ARPA" means the federal American Rescue Plan Act
753 of 2021, Public Law 117-2, which amends Title VI of the Social
754 Security Act.

755 (c) "State Recovery Funds" means Coronavirus State
756 Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded through Section 602 of Title VI of
757 the Social Security Act amended by Section 9901 of the federal
758 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2.

759 (d) "Local Recovery Funds" means Coronavirus Local
760 Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded through Section 603 of Title VI of



761 the Social Security Act amended by Section 9901 of the federal
762 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2.

763 (e) "Department" means the Department of Environmental
764 Quality.

765 (f) "Professional fees" means fees for the services of
766 attorneys and engineering, surveying, and environmental studies.

767 (g) "Project" means the infrastructure improvements
768 defined in an application that (i) complies with all requirements
769 of ARPA, and (ii) is eligible for a grant award under this
770 section.

771 (4) (a) On or before July 1, 2022, the Department of
772 Environmental Quality shall promulgate rules and regulations
773 necessary to administer the MCWI Grant Program prescribed under
774 this section, including application procedures and deadlines. The
775 department is exempt from compliance with the Mississippi
776 Administrative Procedures Law in fulfilling the requirements of
777 this section.

778 (b) The Department of Health shall advise the
779 Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality regarding all such
780 rules and regulations as related to the federal Safe Drinking
781 Water Act.

782 (5) Funding under the MCWI Grant Program shall be allocated
783 to projects certified by the Mississippi Department of
784 Environmental Quality as eligible for federal funding, including,
785 but not be limited to, the following:



- 786 (a) Construction of publicly owned treatment works;
- 787 (b) Projects pursuant to the implementation of a
788 nonpoint source pollution management program established under the
789 Clean Water Act (CWA);
- 790 (c) Decentralized wastewater treatment systems that
791 treat municipal wastewater or domestic sewage;
- 792 (d) Management and treatment of stormwater or
793 subsurface drainage water;
- 794 (e) Water conservation, efficiency, or reuse measures;
- 795 (f) Development and implementation of a conservation
796 and management plan under the CWA;
- 797 (g) Watershed projects meeting the criteria set forth
798 in the CWA;
- 799 (h) Energy consumption reduction for publicly owned
800 treatment works;
- 801 (i) Reuse or recycling of wastewater, stormwater, or
802 subsurface drainage water;
- 803 (j) Facilities to improve drinking water quality;
- 804 (k) Transmission and distribution, including
805 improvements of water pressure or prevention of contamination in
806 infrastructure and lead service line replacements;
- 807 (l) New sources to replace contaminated drinking water
808 or increase drought resilience, including aquifer storage and
809 recovery system for water storage;



810 (m) Storage of drinking water, such as to prevent
811 contaminants or equalize water demands;

812 (n) Purchase of water systems and interconnection of
813 systems;

814 (o) New community water systems;

815 (p) Culvert repair, resizing, and removal, replacement
816 of storm sewers, and additional types of stormwater
817 infrastructure;

818 (q) Dam and reservoir rehabilitation, if the primary
819 purpose of dam or reservoir is for drinking water supply and
820 project is necessary for the provision of drinking water;

821 (r) Broad set of lead remediation projects eligible
822 under EPA grant programs authorized by the Water Infrastructure
823 Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act; and

824 (s) Any eligible drinking water, wastewater or
825 stormwater project through ARPA guidelines, guidance, rules,
826 regulations and other criteria, as may be amended from time to
827 time, by the United States Department of the Treasury.

828 (6) The governing authority of a municipality, county or
829 public utility that is not regulated by the Public Service
830 Commission may submit an application for grant funds under this
831 section if the applicant is an operator-member of Mississippi 811,
832 Inc., as defined in Section 77-13-3. Applicants shall certify to
833 the department that each expenditure of the funds awarded to them
834 under this section is in compliance with ARPA guidelines,



835 guidance, rules, regulations and other criteria, as may be amended
836 from time to time, by the United States Department of the Treasury
837 regarding the use of monies from the State Coronavirus State
838 Fiscal Recovery Funds. Subsequent submissions will be due by the
839 dates established by the department.

840 (7) An application for a grant under this section shall be
841 submitted at such time, be in such form, and contain such
842 information as the department prescribes. Each application for
843 grant funds shall include the following at a minimum: (a)
844 applicant contact information; (b) project description and type of
845 project; (c) project map; (d) estimate of population affected by
846 the project; (e) disadvantaged community criteria (population,
847 median household income, unemployment, current water/sewer rates);
848 (f) estimated project cost; (g) list of match funds of direct
849 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds received and to be
850 received from the federal government, a certification that such
851 funds have been or will be used for the project detailed in the
852 application, and documentation of commitment; (h) estimated
853 project schedule and readiness to proceed; (i) engineering
854 services agreement; (j) engineering reports; and (k) information
855 about status of obtaining any required permits.

856 (8) The department must apply a system for use in ranking
857 the grant applications received, unless the Legislature funds all
858 eligible grant requests under the program. When applying the
859 ranking system, the department shall apply a greater weight to



860 projects that have approved engineering/design, plans and permits
861 if the department has deemed the project is ready to begin
862 construction within six (6) months. Projects that are included on
863 the municipal or county engineer's approved list and provide
864 applicable supporting documentation shall receive additional
865 consideration awarded to the application. The ranking system
866 shall include the following factors, at a minimum: (a) the
867 environmental impact of the proposed project; (b) the proposed
868 project's ability to address noncompliance with state/federal
869 requirements; (c) the extent to which the project promotes
870 economic development; (d) the number of people served by the
871 project and the number of communities the project serves; (e)
872 impacts of the proposed project on disadvantaged/overburdened
873 communities; (f) the grant applicant's prior efforts to secure
874 funding to address the proposed project's objectives; (g) the
875 grant applicant's proposed contribution of other funds or in-kind
876 cost-sharing to the proposed project; (h) the grant applicant's
877 long-term plans for the financial and physical operation and
878 maintenance of the project; (i) the grant applicant's capacity to
879 initiate construction in a timely manner and complete the proposed
880 project by the deadline specified by the United States Department
881 of Treasury rules for ARPA funds; (j) the extent to which the
882 project benefits multiple political subdivisions in a regional
883 manner; (k) the project's ability to enhance public service



884 infrastructure, including transportation and emergency access; and
885 (1) any other factors as determined by the department.

886 (9) The grant program shall include a specific emphasis on
887 addressing the needs of an economically disadvantaged community,
888 including providing safe, reliable drinking water in areas that
889 lack infrastructure, providing sewage treatment capacity in
890 unsewered areas and providing regional development of
891 infrastructure to serve multiple communities.

892 (10) Applications shall be reviewed and scored as they are
893 received, unless the Legislature funds all eligible grant requests
894 under the program. The Mississippi Department of Environmental
895 Quality shall certify whether each project submitted is a
896 "necessary investment" in water, wastewater, or stormwater
897 infrastructure as defined in the American Rescue Plan Act and all
898 applicable guidance issued by the United States Department of the
899 Treasury. The Department of Environmental Quality shall review
900 the lists of recommended water infrastructure projects and issue
901 its list of recommended projects to the Mississippi Department of
902 Health for its advice. Grant agreements shall be executed between
903 the recipient and the Mississippi Department of Environmental
904 Quality. All final awards shall be determined at the discretion
905 of the executive director of the department. Any funds awarded to
906 the City of Jackson under this section shall be deposited in the
907 Capital City Water/Sewer Projects Fund of the State Treasury.
908 Funds shall be obligated to a grantee upon the execution of a



909 grant agreement between the department and the approved applicant.
910 Funds shall be made available to a grantee when the department
911 obtains the necessary support for reimbursement. The department
912 is authorized to conduct additional rounds of grants as needed;
913 however, in the first round no more than forty percent (40%) of
914 the total funds appropriated for each grant program may be awarded
915 by the department, and the remaining funds may be awarded in the
916 final round which shall occur no later than six (6) months from
917 the previous round. To ensure equitable treatment between the
918 categories of projects, no less than twenty percent (20%) awarded
919 under this section shall be allocated to each of the three (3)
920 categories of drinking water projects, wastewater projects and
921 stormwater projects. In the final round, any funds not requested
922 may be allocated to any category.

923 (11) Grant funds shall be used prospectively; however, grant
924 funds may be used to reimburse expenses incurred before the
925 enactment of this program if the costs are adequately documented
926 and comply with applicable ARPA guidelines. An applicant must
927 agree to obtain all necessary state and federal permits and follow
928 all state bidding and contracting laws and fiscally sound
929 practices in the administration of the funds.

930 (12) (a) Monies must be disbursed under this section in
931 compliance with the guidelines, guidance, rules, regulations or
932 other criteria, as may be amended from time to time, of the United
933 States Department of the Treasury regarding the use of monies from



934 the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, established by the
935 American Rescue Plan of 2021.

936 (b) The use of funds allocated under this program shall
937 be subject to audit by the United States Department of the
938 Treasury's Office of Inspector General and the Mississippi Office
939 of the State Auditor. Each person receiving funds under these
940 programs found to be fully or partially noncompliant with the
941 requirements in this section shall return to the state all or a
942 portion of the funds received.

943 (13) The department shall submit to the Lieutenant Governor,
944 Speaker of the House, House and Senate Appropriations Chairmen,
945 and the Legislative Budget Office quarterly reports and annual
946 reports that are due by the dates established in the Compliance
947 and Reporting Guidance by the United States Department of
948 Treasury. The reports shall contain the applications received,
949 the score of the applications, the amount of grant funds awarded
950 to each applicant, the amount of grant funds expended by each
951 applicant, and status of each applicant's project. The score of
952 the applications is not required if the award was provided in the
953 final round of grants and the Legislature provided the total
954 amount of funds for all eligible grant requests.

955 (14) Grant funds shall be available under this section
956 through December 31, 2026, or on the date of the fund expenditure
957 deadline provided by the federal government, whichever occurs
958 later. Each grant recipient shall certify for any project for



959 which a grant is awarded that if the project is not completed by
960 December 31, 2026, and the United States Congress does not enact
961 an extension of the deadline on the availability of ARPA funds,
962 then the grant recipient will complete the project through other
963 funds.

964 (15) The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality may
965 retain an amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the total
966 funds allocated to the program to defray administrative costs.

967 (16) The department shall be exempt from provisions of the
968 Public Procurement Review Board for any requirements of personal
969 or professional service contracts or the pre-approval of the
970 solicitation for such contracts used in the execution of its
971 responsibilities under this section. This subsection shall stand
972 repealed on January 1, 2026.

973 (17) The provisions of this section shall stand repealed on
974 January 1, 2027.

975 **SECTION 12.** Upon the effective date of this act, the State
976 Treasurer, in conjunction with the State Fiscal Officer, shall
977 transfer the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) from the Coronavirus State
978 Fiscal Recovery Fund (Fund No. 6821113000) to the Coronavirus
979 State Fiscal Recovery Lost Revenue Fund (Fund No. 3822113000).

980 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
981 and after its passage.

