

By: Senator(s) Bryan

To: Public Health and  
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2341

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 41-99-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE THAT UNTIL 2026 THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SHALL USE  
3 FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION TO MAKE PHYSICIAN GRANTS TO  
4 QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 41-99-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
7 amended as follows:

8 41-99-5. (1) Any Mississippi qualified health center  
9 desiring to participate in the program shall make application for  
10 a service grant to the department in a form satisfactory to the  
11 department. The department shall receive service grant proposals  
12 from Mississippi qualified health centers. All proposals shall be  
13 submitted in accordance with the provisions of grant procedures,  
14 criteria and standards developed and made public by the  
15 department.

16 (2) The department shall use the funds provided by  
17 subsection (6) (a) of this section to make care grants until July  
18 1, \* \* \* 2026, to Mississippi qualified health centers upon  
19 proposals made under subsection (1) of this section. Care grants



20 that are awarded to Mississippi qualified health centers shall  
21 only be used by those centers to:

22 (a) Increase access to preventative and primary care  
23 services by uninsured or medically indigent patients that are  
24 served by those centers; and

25 (b) Create new services or augment existing services  
26 provided to uninsured or medically indigent patients, including,  
27 but not limited to, primary care medical and preventive services,  
28 dental services, optometric services, in-house laboratory  
29 services, diagnostic services, pharmacy services, nutritional  
30 services and social services.

31 (3) The department shall use the funds provided by  
32 subsection (6)(b) of this section to make physician grants until  
33 July 1, \* \* \* 2026, to Mississippi qualified health centers upon  
34 proposals made under subsection (1) of this section. A physician  
35 grant awarded to a Mississippi qualified health center shall only  
36 be used by that center to provide a one-time salary supplement to  
37 a primary care physician being recruited under the program.

38 (4) Service grants received by Mississippi qualified health  
39 centers under this chapter shall not be used:

40 (a) To supplant federal funds traditionally received by  
41 those centers, but shall be used to supplement them;

42 (b) For land or real estate investments;

43 (c) To finance or satisfy any existing debt; or



44 (d) Unless the health center specifically complies with  
45 the definition of a Mississippi qualified health center contained  
46 in Section 41-99-1.

47 (5) The department shall develop regulations, procedures and  
48 application forms to govern how service grants will be awarded,  
49 shall develop a plan to ensure that care grants are equitably  
50 distributed among all Mississippi qualified health centers and  
51 that physician grants are distributed to the Mississippi qualified  
52 health centers where there is the most need, and shall develop an  
53 audit process to assure that grant monies are used to provide and  
54 expend care to the uninsured and medically indigent.

55 (6) The department shall establish a fund for the purpose of  
56 providing service grants to Mississippi qualified health centers  
57 in accordance with this chapter and the following terms and  
58 conditions:

59 (a) The amount of care grants issued under this chapter  
60 shall be not less than Four Million Dollars (\$4,000,000.00) per  
61 state fiscal year, awarded as follows:

62 (i) No Mississippi qualified health center shall  
63 receive care grants under this program in excess of ten percent  
64 (10%) of available funds per calendar year; and

65 (ii) Each Mississippi qualified health center  
66 receiving a care grant shall provide an annual report to the  
67 department that details the number of additional uninsured and



68 medically indigent patients that are cared for and the types of  
69 services that are provided;

70 (b) The total amount of physician grants issued under  
71 this chapter during any fiscal year shall not be more than the  
72 amount appropriated to the department for that purpose, awarded as  
73 follows:

74 (i) Per fiscal year, a Mississippi qualified  
75 health center shall receive only one (1) physician grant under the  
76 program, which shall not exceed the amount specified in the  
77 appropriation bill for the department;

78 (ii) For the Mississippi qualified health center  
79 to be eligible for a physician grant, a primary care physician  
80 shall agree to work, full time, for the Mississippi qualified  
81 health center for at least three (3) consecutive years from the  
82 date of an executed employment contract;

83 (iii) A Mississippi qualified health center shall  
84 use a physician grant to supplement a physician's salary within  
85 the first one hundred twenty (120) days of employment;

86 (iv) If a physician grant is disbursed to a  
87 Mississippi qualified health center and the hiring of the primary  
88 care physician does not materialize, the Mississippi qualified  
89 health center shall repay the entire physician grant award to the  
90 department;

91 (v) If a primary care physician abandons his or  
92 her employment at the Mississippi qualified health center before



93 he or she has worked there for three (3) years, the primary care  
94 physician shall repay to the department a pro rata share of the  
95 physician grant based on the number of unserved months during the  
96 three-year period. Under this subparagraph (v), the department  
97 shall have a cause of action against the primary care physician to  
98 recover grant monies; and

99 (vi) Each Mississippi qualified health center  
100 receiving a physician care grant shall provide an annual report to  
101 the department that details the following:

102 1. The number of patients treated by the new  
103 primary care physician; and

104 2. The general types of medical services  
105 rendered by the new primary care physician; and

106 (c) On or before January 15 of each year, the  
107 department shall provide the reports required by this subsection  
108 to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Senate Public Health and  
109 Welfare Committee, to the Chair and Vice Chair of the House Public  
110 Health and Human Services Committee, to the Lieutenant Governor  
111 and to the Speaker of the House.

112 (7) The department shall establish an advisory council to  
113 review and make recommendations to the department on the awarding  
114 of any grants to Mississippi qualified health centers. Those  
115 recommendations by the advisory council shall not be binding upon  
116 the department, but when a recommendation by the advisory council  
117 is not followed by the department, the department shall place in



118 its minutes reasons for not accepting the advisory council's  
119 recommendation, and provide for an appeals process. All approved  
120 service grants shall be awarded within thirty (30) days of  
121 approval by the department.

122 (8) The composition of the advisory council shall be the  
123 following:

124 (a) Two (2) employees of the department, one (1) of  
125 whom must have experience in reviewing and writing grant  
126 proposals;

127 (b) Two (2) executive employees of Mississippi  
128 qualified health centers, one (1) of whom must be a chief  
129 financial officer;

130 (c) Two (2) health care providers who are affiliated  
131 with a Mississippi qualified health center, one (1) of whom must  
132 be a physician; and

133 (d) One (1) health care provider who is not affiliated  
134 with a Mississippi qualified health center or the department but  
135 has training and experience in primary care.

136 (9) The department may use a portion of any grant monies  
137 received under this chapter to administer the program and to pay  
138 reasonable expenses incurred by the advisory council; however, in  
139 no case shall more than one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) or Sixty  
140 Thousand Dollars (\$60,000.00) annually, whichever is greater, be  
141 used for program expenses.



142 (10) No assistance shall be provided to a Mississippi  
143 qualified health center under this chapter unless the Mississippi  
144 qualified health center certifies to the department that it will  
145 not discriminate against any employee or against any applicant for  
146 employment because of race, religion, color, national origin, sex  
147 or age.

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

