

By: Senator(s) Williams

To: Universities and
Colleges; Energy

SENATE BILL NO. 2557

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-113-21, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
 2 TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
 3 LEARNING, UPON RECOMMENDATION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE AGRICULTURAL
 4 AND FORESTRY EXPERIMENTAL STATION AT THE MISSISSIPPI STATE
 5 UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE, TO ENTER INTO
 6 CONTRACTS, LEASES AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR TERMS NOT TO EXCEED
 7 FIFTY (50) YEARS WITH ANY PERSONS OR BUSINESS ENTITY FOR THE
 8 DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLAR INSTALLATION AT ANY BRANCH RESEARCH STATION
 9 OPERATED BY THE MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY EXPERIMENTAL
 10 STATION; TO SET CERTAIN LEASE REQUIREMENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
 11 STATE SHALL RETAIN ALL MINERAL RIGHTS TO THE REAL PROPERTY LEASED
 12 UNDER THE ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

14 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-113-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
 15 amended as follows:

16 37-113-21. (1) Agriculture is the primary industry of
 17 Mississippi and it is to the interest of said state agriculture
 18 that research in the fields of livestock products, pastures and
 19 forage crops, poultry, herd and flock management, horticulture,
 20 farm mechanization, soil conservation, forestry, disease and
 21 insect and parasite control, the testing of plants and livestock
 22 under different conditions, farm enterprises for different sized
 23 farms under different soil and climatic conditions and market



24 locations, and other important phases of Mississippi's
25 agricultural economy, be expanded in the manner provided for in
26 this section.

27 (2) There is hereby authorized a branch experiment station
28 to be known as the Brown Loam Branch Experiment Station, which is
29 to be located on a part of that tract of land owned by the State
30 of Mississippi and formerly operated as the Oakley Penitentiary
31 and known as the Oakley Youth Development Center, same to be
32 selected in accordance with Laws, 1954, Chapter 159, Section 3,
33 and used as an agricultural experiment station. This property is
34 to be supplied with necessary buildings, equipment, and other
35 facilities; and title to such Oakley Penitentiary Farm, now known
36 as the Oakley Youth Development Center, is to be transferred to
37 the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning for
38 the use of the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experimental
39 Station as the site of, and to be used for said Brown Loam Branch
40 Experiment Station in accordance with Laws, 1954, Chapter 159,
41 Section 3.

42 There is hereby authorized a branch experiment station to be
43 known as the Coastal Plain Branch Experiment Station to be located
44 on a suitable tract of approximately nine hundred (900) acres to
45 be purchased in the upper coastal plain or short leaf pine area of
46 east central Mississippi and to be supplied with necessary
47 buildings, equipment, and other facilities.



48 The enlargement of the Holly Springs Branch Experiment
49 Station, hereafter to be known as the North Mississippi Branch
50 Experiment Station, is hereby authorized, by the purchase of
51 approximately five hundred (500) acres of additional land adjacent
52 to or in the vicinity of either of the two (2) farms now operated
53 by said branch stations, and by the provision of the necessary
54 buildings, equipment, and other facilities, and the sale as,
55 hereinafter provided, of that farm of said branch station which is
56 not adjacent to the additional land to be purchased.

57 There is hereby authorized the reactivation of the former
58 McNeil Branch Experiment Station to be operated as a part of the
59 South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station at Poplarville, and to
60 be supplied with necessary buildings, equipment, and other
61 facilities.

62 There is hereby authorized a branch experiment station to be
63 known as the Black Belt Branch Experiment Station to be located on
64 a suitable tract of approximately six hundred forty (640) acres of
65 land to be purchased in Noxubee County, Mississippi, and to be
66 supplied with the necessary buildings, equipment, and other
67 facilities.

68 There is hereby authorized a branch experiment station to be
69 known as the Northeast Mississippi Branch Experiment Station to be
70 located on a suitable tract of approximately two hundred (200)
71 acres of land to be purchased in Lee County, Mississippi. Said
72 station shall be primarily devoted to the development of the dairy



73 industry and shall be supplied with necessary buildings,
74 equipment, and other facilities.

75 There is hereby authorized the expansion of the office and
76 laboratory building at the Delta Branch Experiment Station at
77 Stoneville and of the office and laboratory and dwellings for
78 station workers at the Truck Crops Branch Experiment Station at
79 Crystal Springs.

80 (3) The governing authorities of any municipality, town, or
81 county in the state may, in their discretion, donate land, money
82 or other property to the Board of Trustees of State Institutions
83 of Higher Learning in furtherance of the purposes of this section.

84 For the purpose of securing funds to carry out this
85 subsection, the governing authorities of such municipality, town,
86 or county are hereby authorized and empowered, in their
87 discretion, to issue bonds or negotiate notes for the purpose of
88 acquiring by purchase, gift, or lease real estate for the purpose
89 herein authorized. Such issuance of bonds or notes shall be
90 issued in an amount not to exceed the limitation now or hereafter
91 imposed by law on counties, municipalities and towns, and shall be
92 issued in all respects including interest rate, maturities and
93 other details as is now or may hereafter be provided by general
94 law regulating the issuance of * * * bonds or notes by the
95 governing authorities of such municipality, town, or county.

96 (4) Any person, firm or corporation may contribute or donate
97 real or other property to the Board of Trustees of State



98 Institutions of Higher Learning in furtherance of the purpose of
99 this section.

100 (5) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
101 Learning is hereby authorized, upon recommendation of the Director
102 of the Agricultural and Forestry Experimental Station at the
103 Mississippi State University of Agriculture and Applied Science,
104 which recommendation is approved by and transmitted to said board
105 by the president of said university, to carry out the provisions
106 of this section with particular reference to the establishment,
107 reactivation, expansion, and the discontinuance of branch stations
108 as herein provided, to receive and accept title to any land or
109 property or money herein authorized, to buy or sell and dispose of
110 any real or personal property herein authorized, to make available
111 for carrying into effect the provisions of this section all money
112 received from such sale or sales, and to do any and all things
113 necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section. One-half
114 (1/2) interest in and to all oil, gas and other minerals shall be
115 retained under any lands sold hereunder.

116 (6) A gift of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00),
117 authorized by the general education board of the Rockefeller
118 Foundation for the development of agricultural research, with
119 particular reference to expanding the branch experiment stations
120 and conditioned upon a general program of expansion substantially,
121 as herein provided, is hereby accepted. The Director of the
122 Agricultural and Forestry Experimental Station at the Mississippi



123 State University of Agriculture and Applied Science is authorized
124 and instructed to control and expend such fund in the same manner
125 as other funds appropriated to carry out the provisions of this
126 section.

127 (7) The experiment station in Clay County, Mississippi,
128 shall not be affected by this section.

129 (8) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
130 Learning is hereby authorized, upon recommendation of the Director
131 of the Agricultural and Forestry Experimental Station at the
132 Mississippi State University of Agriculture and Applied Science,
133 which recommendation is approved by and transmitted to said board
134 by the president of said university, to enter into contracts,
135 leases and other arrangements for terms not to exceed fifty (50)
136 years with any persons or business entity for the development of a
137 solar installation at any branch research station operated by the
138 Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experimental Station.

139 (9) If all or any portion of the property described in
140 subsection (8) of this section is leased, Mississippi State
141 University of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, with the approval
142 of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning,
143 is authorized to negotiate all aspects of any lease or sublease
144 and any terms and ancillary agreements pertaining to any lease or
145 sublease as may be reasonably necessary to effectuate the intent
146 and purposes of subsection (8) of this section and to ensure a
147 fair and equitable return to the state. All proceeds derived or



148 received from the agreements and leases entered into under
149 subsection (8) of this section shall be deposited into a special
150 fund and expended only for the use and benefit of Mississippi
151 State University. At the end of the lease term provided in
152 subsection (8) of this section, the property leased under the
153 authority provided herein shall revert to Mississippi State
154 University. The State of Mississippi shall retain all mineral
155 rights to the real property leased under subsection (8) of this
156 section.

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

