

By: Representative Scott

To: State Affairs;
Accountability, Efficiency,
Transparency

HOUSE BILL NO. 378

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 57-1-55, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MDA) TO CONDUCT AN
3 ANNUAL STUDY AND PROVIDE A LEGISLATIVE REPORT THAT IDENTIFIES THE
4 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITIONS AND NEEDS OF CERTAIN COUNTIES
5 WITH THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGES OF POVERTY WITHIN THE STATE; TO
6 REQUIRE MDA TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE TO SUCH COUNTIES TO
7 ASSIST THE COUNTIES IN IMPROVING THEIR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURES; AND
8 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 57-1-55, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 57-1-55. (1) The Mississippi Development Authority shall
13 have the following general powers and duties: To develop and
14 manage programs which enhance the climate for economic growth
15 through assistance to private sector businesses, local communities
16 and individuals, and through an extensive national and
17 international marketing effort.

18 (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall have the
19 following general powers and duties with respect to economic
20 development:



21 (a) To plan, supervise and direct an active program of
22 solicitation of industries to locate within the state;

23 (b) To prepare, maintain and disseminate information
24 which is needed by companies in evaluating site locations;

25 (c) To consult with, advise and assist prospective
26 industries wishing to locate within the state;

27 (d) To encourage new or expanding industries, which
28 will add to the economy, to locate within the state;

29 (e) To maintain a coordinated liaison function with
30 other development groups, including state and federal agencies,
31 and planning and development districts, utility companies,
32 chambers of commerce and railroads;

33 (f) To assist communities and counties within the state
34 in preparation for economic growth;

35 (g) To assist new and existing business and industry
36 and encourage their development and expansion;

37 (h) To plan and conduct a nationwide advertising
38 program promoting the state to prospective industry. Any contract
39 entered into for such purposes shall be advertised, bid and
40 accepted in accordance with the same procedure as prescribed for
41 the advertisement and acceptance of bids for the purchase of
42 commodities and contracts for public purchases under Chapter 7,
43 Title 31, Mississippi Code of 1972;

44 (i) To work with economic development agencies of the
45 federal government in areas of industrial development and provide



information to industrial prospects regarding the availability of federal funds and assistance;

(j) To work with the Department of Corrections, pursuant to the provisions of Section 47-5-501 et seq., in identifying and evaluating acceptable industries and businesses and in acting as an agent of the Department of Corrections by communicating with such concerns and aggressively soliciting their participation in the Correctional Industries Work Program;

(k) To perform related work as required;

(l) To disseminate information about financial and other programs of the Mississippi Development Authority that will assist in the creation or expansion of industries processing wood products in this state;

(m) To market processed and raw agricultural products domestically and abroad;

(n) To aid in the establishment of business incubation centers by private business interests, not-for-profit corporations, and/or governmental entities. The department may provide funds by contract for the establishment of business incubation centers and may contract for space in which business incubation centers will be located. Business incubation centers are defined as facilities and support services that encourage the establishment of successful small businesses by providing a short-term sheltered environment. The department may solicit and accept grants and other financial aid or support from private or



public sources to aid in the development of business incubation centers. In addition, advice and assistance to established business incubation centers may be provided by the department;

(o) To employ licensed real estate brokers and appraisers necessary for the industrial development of any real estate under the ownership or control of the Mississippi Development Authority. Any contract entered into for such purposes shall be advertised, bid and accepted in accordance with the same procedure as prescribed for the advertisement and acceptance of bids for the purchase of commodities and contracts for public purchases under Chapter 7, Title 31, Mississippi Code of 1972; * * *

(p) * * * To establish, administer, manage, make expenditures and allocations from the Forestry Facility Grant Program under the provisions of Section 57-1-781 * * *; and

(q) To study and identify annually the public infrastructure needs of the twenty (20) counties with the highest percentages of poverty within the state and to report to the Legislature regarding its findings by December 31 of each year. In addition, the counties described in this paragraph shall be given guidance and assistance by the Mississippi Development Authority in seeking loans, grants and other financial assistance from federal and state sources to assist such counties to improve the public infrastructures.



95 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
96 and after July 1, 2025.

