

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:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(h) To plan and conduct a nationwide advertising program promoting the state to prospective industry. 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,

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

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

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

54 (k) To perform related work as required;

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

