

By: Senator(s) Fillingane

To: Judiciary, Division B

SENATE BILL NO. 2204

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE A SHERIFF, CHIEF OF POLICE, THE DIRECTOR OF
2 HIGHWAY PATROL OR CONSTABLE OR ANY OTHER PEACE OFFICER IN THIS
3 STATE TO REPORT TO THE MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK
4 THEFT BUREAU ALL REPORTS OF STOLEN FARM-RELATED VEHICLES; TO
5 REQUIRE ANY COMMERCIAL ENTITY IN THE BUSINESS OF BUYING, SELLING,
6 LEASING, RENTING, STORING OR TRANSPORTING FARM-RELATED VEHICLES,
7 HAVING POSSESSION OR CUSTODY OF FARM-RELATED VEHICLES TO REPORT TO
8 THE MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK THEFT BUREAU ANY THEFT,
9 BURGLARY, ROBBERY OR ATTEMPTED THEFT, BURGLARY OR ROBBERY OF
10 FARM-RELATED VEHICLES; TO AMEND SECTION 69-29-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE
11 OF 1972, TO CONFORM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) Any sheriff, chief of police, director of
14 highway patrol or constable, or any other peace officer in this
15 state, shall report to the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock
16 Theft Bureau all reports of stolen farm-related vehicles.

17 (2) Any commercial entity in the business of buying,
18 selling, leasing, renting, storing or transporting farm-related
19 vehicles, having possession or custody of farm-related vehicles
20 shall report to the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft
21 Bureau any theft, burglary, robbery or attempted theft, burglary
22 or robbery of farm-related vehicles.



(3) For purposes of this section, "farm-related vehicle" shall mean farm machinery, all-terrain vehicles or off-road vehicles.

SECTION 2. Section 69-29-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

69-29-1. (1) (a) There is established the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau.

(b) The Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce shall appoint a director of the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau. Such director shall have at least five (5) years of law enforcement experience. Such director shall be responsible solely to the supervision of the Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce and to no other person or entity. Such director may be discharged only for just cause shown.

(c) The director may employ twelve (12) agricultural and livestock theft investigators. Each investigator shall be certified as a law enforcement officer, successfully completing at least a nine-week training course, in accordance with Section 45-6-11. The curriculum for the training of constables shall not be sufficient for meeting the certification requirements of this paragraph. In the selection of investigators under this section, preference shall be given to persons who have previous law enforcement experience.

(d) The director appointed under this section, under the direction, control and supervision of the commissioner, and



the investigators employed under this section shall perform only the duties described in subsection (2) of this section and shall not be assigned any other duties.

(2) The director appointed under this section and the investigators employed under this section shall have the following powers, duties and authority:

(a) To enforce all of the provisions of Sections 69-29-9 and 69-29-11, and particularly those portions requiring persons transporting livestock to have a bill of sale in their possession; to make investigations of violations of such sections and to arrest persons violating same;

(b) To enforce all of the laws of this state enacted for the purpose of preventing the theft of livestock, poultry, timber and agricultural, aquacultural and timber products and implements; to make investigations of violations thereof and to arrest persons violating same;

(c) To cooperate with all regularly constituted law enforcement officers relative to the matters herein set forth;

(d) To serve warrants and other process emanating from any court of lawful jurisdiction, including search warrants, in all matters herein set forth;

(e) To carry proper credentials evidencing their authority, which shall be exhibited to any person making demand therefor;



72 (f) To make arrests without warrant in all matters
73 herein set forth in cases where same is authorized under the
74 constitutional and general laws of this state;

75 (g) To handle the registration of brands of cattle and
76 livestock;

77 (h) To investigate, prevent, apprehend and arrest those
78 persons anywhere in the state who are violating any of the laws
79 administered by the Department of Agriculture and Commerce,
80 including, but not limited to, all agriculture-related crimes;

81 (i) To access and examine records of any person,
82 business or entity that harvests, loads, carries, receives or
83 manufactures timber products as defined in this section. Each
84 such person or entity shall permit the director or any
85 investigator of the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft
86 Bureau to examine records of the sale, transfer or purchase of
87 timber or timber products, including, but not limited to,
88 contracts, load tickets, settlement sheets, drivers' logs,
89 invoices, checks and any other records or documents related to an
90 ongoing investigation of the Mississippi Agricultural and
91 Livestock Theft Bureau;

92 (j) To conduct training for law enforcement regarding
93 laws enforced by the bureau and to assist any other law
94 enforcement agencies in responding to matters that may be related
95 to agriculture and commerce in the State of Mississippi and in



cases of natural disasters or other disasters to respond as needed
or as requested by other agencies * * *;

(k) To maintain a registry of reports of stolen
farm-related vehicles.

(3) The Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce shall
furnish such investigators with such vehicles, equipment and
supplies as may be necessary. All expenses of same, and all other
expenses incurred in the administration of this section, shall be
paid from such appropriation as may be made by the Legislature.

(4) The Mississippi Department of Revenue and its agents and
employees shall cooperate with such investigators by furnishing to
them information as to any possible or suspected violations of any
of the laws mentioned herein, including specifically Section
69-29-27, and in any other lawful manner.

(5) The conservation officers of the Department of Wildlife,
Fisheries and Parks are authorized to cooperate with and assist
the agricultural and livestock theft investigators in the
enforcement and apprehension of violators of laws regarding
agricultural and livestock theft.

(6) The Mississippi Forestry Commission employees are
excluded from any timber and timber products theft investigative
responsibilities except when technical expertise is needed and
requested through the State Forester or his designee.

(7) For the purposes of this section, "timber product" means
timber of all kinds, species or sizes, including, but not limited



121 to, logs, lumber, poles, pilings, posts, blocks, bolts, cordwood
122 and pulpwood, pine stumpwood, pine knots or other distillate wood,
123 crossties, turpentine (crude gum), pine straw, firewood and all
124 other products derived from timber or trees that have a sale or
125 commercial value.

126 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
127 and after July 1, 2025.

