

By: Senator(s) Fillingane

To: Judiciary, Division B

SENATE BILL NO. 2204
(As Passed the Senate)

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

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

14 **SECTION 1.** (1) Any sheriff, chief of police, director of
15 highway patrol or constable, or any other peace officer in this
16 state, shall report to the Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock
17 Theft Bureau any theft, burglary, robbery or attempted theft,
18 burglary or robbery of agriculture-related vehicles, livestock,
19 timber, grain or agriculture-related chemicals.

20 (2) Any commercial entity in the business of buying,
21 selling, leasing, renting, storing or transporting
22 agriculture-related vehicles, having possession or custody of
23 agriculture-related vehicles shall report to the Mississippi



24 Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau any theft, burglary,
25 robbery or attempted theft, burglary or robbery of
26 agriculture-related vehicles.

27 (3) The Director of the Mississippi Agricultural and
28 Livestock Theft Bureau shall create and publish a standard form
29 for reporting crimes under this section.

30 (4) For purposes of this section, "agriculture-related
31 vehicle" shall mean agricultural machinery or components,
32 all-terrain vehicles or off-road vehicles.

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

35 69-29-1. (1) (a) There is established the Mississippi
36 Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau.

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

44 (c) The director may employ twelve (12) agricultural
45 and livestock theft investigators. Each investigator shall be
46 certified as a law enforcement officer, successfully completing at
47 least a nine-week training course, in accordance with Section
48 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;



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

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

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

82 (g) To handle the registration of brands of cattle and
83 livestock;

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

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



ongoing investigation of the Mississippi Agricultural and
Livestock Theft Bureau;

(j) To conduct training for law enforcement regarding
laws enforced by the bureau and to assist any other law
enforcement agencies in responding to matters that may be related
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 * * *; and

(k) To maintain a registry of reports of stolen
agriculture-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.



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

126 (7) For the purposes of this section, "timber product" means
127 timber of all kinds, species or sizes, including, but not limited
128 to, logs, lumber, poles, pilings, posts, blocks, bolts, cordwood
129 and pulpwood, pine stumpwood, pine knots or other distillate wood,
130 crossties, turpentine (crude gum), pine straw, firewood and all
131 other products derived from timber or trees that have a sale or
132 commercial value.

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

