

By: Senator(s) Chassaniol, Jordan

To: Corrections; Economic
and Workforce Development

SENATE BILL NO. 2357

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
2 TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE GREENWOOD-LEFLORE-CARROLL
3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT,
4 CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A DELTA WORK RELEASE
5 PROGRAM TO EMPLOY OFFENDERS WITHIN THE CUSTODY OF THE DEPARTMENT
6 OR PRISON INDUSTRIES IN LOCAL INDUSTRIES OR BUSINESSES TO ASSIST
7 LOCAL INDUSTRIES' WORKFORCE NEEDS; TO AUTHORIZE THE MISSISSIPPI
8 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS TO CONTRACT WITH THE FOUNDATION TO
9 ADMINISTER THE DELTA WORK RELEASE PROGRAM THROUGH A THIRD-PARTY
10 CONTRACTOR; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN STANDARDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE
11 DELTA WORK RELEASE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Mississippi Department of Corrections is
14 hereby empowered, authorized and directed to enter into necessary
15 contracts with the Greenwood-Leflore-Carroll Economic Development
16 Foundation for the establishment, construction, operation and
17 maintenance of a Delta Work Release Program to employ offenders
18 within the custody of the department or prison industries in local
19 industries or businesses to assist local industries' or business'
20 workforce needs. The Department of Corrections may contract with
21 the nonprofit corporation organized and formed under the



Mississippi Prison Industries Act of 1990 to employ said offenders.

(2) The offenders in the Delta Work Release Program shall be under the supervision of the Mississippi Department of Corrections at all times while working. The offenders shall be paid, by the entity or entities, wages at a rate which is not less than that paid for similar work in the locality in which the work is performed. The wages may be subject to deductions which shall not, in the aggregate, exceed eighty percent (80%) of the gross wages. The deductions shall be limited to the following:

(a) To pay federal, state and local taxes;

(b) To pay reasonable charges for room and board as determined by regulations issued by the Commissioner of Corrections;

(c) To support the offender's family pursuant to state statute, court order or agreement by the offender; and

(d) To pay contributions equaling not less than five percent (5%), but not more than twenty percent (20%) of the offender's gross wages into the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund as created in Section 99-41-29.

(3) Notwithstanding any provision of the law to the contrary, the offenders shall not be qualified to receive any payments for unemployment compensation while incarcerated. However, the offenders shall not solely by their status as offenders be deprived of the right to participate in benefits made



47 available by the federal or state government to other individuals
48 on the basis of their employment, such as workers' compensation.

49 (4) Offenders who participate in the employment must do so
50 voluntarily and must agree in advance to the specific deductions
51 made from gross wages pursuant to this section and to all other
52 financial arrangements or benefits resulting from participation in
53 the employment.

54 (5) The Department of Corrections shall develop rules and
55 regulations to enable the Delta Work Release Program to meet the
56 criteria established by the Bureau of Justice Assistance under the
57 Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program.

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

