

Senate Amendments to House Bill No. 1734

TO THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE:

THIS IS TO INFORM YOU THAT THE SENATE HAS ADOPTED THE AMENDMENTS SET OUT BELOW:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

Amend by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State General Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Public Utilities Staff for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....

.....\$ 2,565,843.00.

SECTION 2. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the special fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Public Utilities Staff which is comprised of special source funds for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the agency for the Atlas Project for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....

.....\$ 80,000.00.

SECTION 3. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of this act, the following positions are authorized:

AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

Permanent: 24

Time-Limited: 0

With the funds herein appropriated, it shall be the agency's responsibility to make certain that funds required for Personal Services for Fiscal Year 2027 do not exceed Fiscal Year 2026 funds appropriated for that purpose unless programs or positions are added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2026 budget by the Mississippi Legislature. The Legislature shall determine the agency's personal services appropriation, which the State Personnel Board shall publish. The agency's personal services appropriation may consist of restricted funds for approved vacancies for Fiscal Year 2026 that may be utilized to fill vacant Fiscal Year 2025 headcount. It shall be the agency's responsibility to ensure that the funds provided for vacancies are used to increase headcount and not for promotions, title changes, in-range salary adjustments or any other mechanism for increasing salaries for current employees. It is the Legislature's intention that no employee salary falls below the minimum salary established by the Mississippi State Personnel Board.

Additionally, the State Personnel Board shall determine and publish the projected annualized payroll costs based on current employees. It shall be the responsibility of the agency head to ensure that actual personnel expenditures for Fiscal Year 2026 do not exceed the data provided by the Legislative Budget Office. If the agency's Fiscal Year 2026 projected cost exceeds the annualized costs, no salary actions shall be processed by the

State Personnel Board except for new hires determined to be essential for the agency.

Any transfers or escalations shall be made in accordance with the terms, conditions, and procedures established by law or allowable under the terms set forth within this act. The State Personnel Board shall not escalate positions without written approval from the Department of Finance and Administration. The Department of Finance and Administration shall not provide written approval to escalate any funds for salaries and/or positions without proof of availability of new or additional funds above the appropriated level.

No general funds authorized to be expended herein shall be used to replace federal funds and/or other special funds used for salaries authorized under the provisions of this act and which are withdrawn and no longer available.

None of the funds herein appropriated shall be used in violation of the Internal Revenue Service's Publication 15-A relating to the reporting of income paid to contract employees, as interpreted by the Office of the State Auditor.

SECTION 4. Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000.00), or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be derived out of any money in the State Treasury to the credit of the Project Atlas Fund, as created in Section 57-1-641, Mississippi Code of 1972, and allocated in a manner as determined by the Treasurer's Office. These funds are provided for expediting services needed for Project Atlas.

73 **SECTION 5.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
74 Public Utilities Staff shall maintain complete accounting and
75 personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds
76 appropriated under this act and that such records shall be in the
77 same format and level of detail as maintained for Fiscal Year
78 2025. It is further the intention of the Legislature that the
79 agency's budget request for Fiscal Year 2027 shall be submitted to
80 the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of
81 detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided
82 during the Fiscal Year 2026 budget request process.

83 **SECTION 6.** It is the intention of the Legislature that
84 whenever two (2) or more bids are received by this agency for the
85 purchase of commodities or equipment, and whenever all things
86 stated in such received bids are equal with respect to price,
87 quality and service, the Mississippi Industries for the Blind
88 shall be given preference. A similar preference shall be given to
89 the Mississippi Industries for the Blind whenever purchases are
90 made without competitive bids.

91 **SECTION 7.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
92 funds herein appropriated shall be expended in compliance with
93 Section 27-104-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, that no state agency
94 shall incur obligations or indebtedness in excess of their
95 appropriation and that the responsible officers, either personally
96 or upon their official bonds, shall be held responsible for
97 actions contrary to this provision.

98 **SECTION 8.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by
99 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the
100 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon
101 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal
102 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the
103 proper person, officer or officers in the manner provided by law.

104 **SECTION 9.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
105 and after July 1, 2025, and shall stand repealed from and after
106 June 30, 2025.

**Further, amend by striking the title in its entirety and
inserting in lieu thereof the following:**

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FROM GENERAL FUNDS IN THE
2 STATE TREASURY FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING THE EXPENSES OF THE
3 PUBLIC UTILITIES STAFF FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026.

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Amanda White
Secretary of the Senate