

By: Representatives Bounds,  
Anderson (122nd), Clark, Eure,  
Hale, Jackson (11th), Paden,  
Pigott, Read

To: Appropriations A

## HOUSE BILL NO. 8

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE SUPPORT AND  
2 MAINTENANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES FOR THE FISCAL  
3 YEAR 2026.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
6 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State General  
7 Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the support and maintenance  
8 of the Department of Marine Resources for the fiscal year  
9 beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....  
10 .....\$ 3,731,912.00.

11 **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
12 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in any special fund in  
13 the State Treasury to the credit of the Department of Marine  
14 Resources for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending  
15 June 30, 2026.....\$ 257,276,719.00.

16 Of the funds appropriated in this section, Three Million  
17 Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$3,050,000.00) is derived from the state  
18 excise taxes upon gasoline, oil and other petroleum products.



19       **SECTION 3.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of  
20 this act, not more than the following amount of funds, with the  
21 exception of the provisions in this section, shall be expended  
22 only for "Personal Services," which includes "Vacancy Funding,"  
23 for the following authorized number of employment headcount:

24       FUNDING:

25           General Funds:	\$    3,731,912.00
26           Special Funds:	\$   11,217,898.00
27           Total Funds:	\$   14,949,810.00

28       PERSONAL SERVICES:

29           Employee Salaries, Wages, and

30           Fringe Benefits:	\$   13,819,968.00
31           Progressions:	\$               0.00
32           Vacancy Funding:	\$    1,129,842.00
33           Total Personal Services:	\$   14,949,810.00

34       AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

35           Permanent:	108
36           Time-Limited:	65

37       As used in this section, the term "Personal Services" shall  
38 mean funds provided under the major object of expenditure category  
39 Personal Services for Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits. Funds  
40 in this category shall not be transferred to any other category.

41       It is the intention of the Legislature to ensure compliance  
42 with the Variable Compensation Plan, as outlined in Section  
43 25-9-147, Mississippi Code of 1972. Payment from these funds shall



44 be in accordance with the Variable Compensation Plan promulgated  
45 by the Mississippi State Personnel Board. It is the Legislature's  
46 intention that no employee's salary falls below the minimum salary  
47 established by the Mississippi State Personnel Board.

48 The State Personnel Board shall determine and publish the  
49 projected annual cost of "Personal Services" based on monthly and  
50 year-to-date payroll expenditures in compliance with the  
51 provisions of this act.

52 With the funds herein appropriated, it shall be the agency's  
53 responsibility to ensure that no single personnel action or  
54 combination of personnel actions, when annualized, exceeds the  
55 Fiscal Year 2026 appropriation for "Personal Services" with the  
56 exception of escalated funds. Further, it shall be the agency's  
57 responsibility to ensure that funds required to be appropriated  
58 for "Personal Services" for Fiscal Year 2027 do not exceed Fiscal  
59 Year 2026 funds appropriated for that purpose unless programs or  
60 positions are added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2026 budget by the  
61 Mississippi Legislature.

62 If, at the time the agency takes any action to change  
63 "Personal Services," the State Personnel Board determines that the  
64 agency has taken or will take an action that would cause the  
65 agency to exceed the funds appropriated in this act when  
66 annualized for Fiscal Year 2026 or increase the need for "Personal  
67 Services" for Fiscal Year 2027, when annualized, the State  
68 Personnel Board shall process no salary actions until such time as



the requirements of the provisions of this section are met with the exception of new hires determined to be essential for the agency.

When used in this section, "Vacancy Funding" shall mean funds included in the Total Personal Services amount listed above and designated for approved vacancies in Fiscal Year 2026. These funds are to be utilized to increase the number of filled headcounts that were authorized but unfilled as of the last day of Fiscal Year 2025. If the agency fills additional headcounts after May 1, 2025, until the end of Fiscal Year 2025, the amount of available Vacancy Funding may be proportionally reduced to reflect the updated number of filled headcounts. The agency shall be responsible for ensuring that "Vacancy Funding" is used to increase headcounts and not for promotions, title changes, in-range salary adjustments, or any other mechanism for increasing salaries for current employees.

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 headcounts without proof of availability of new or additional funds above the appropriated level. Unless specifically noted, all Fiscal Year



2025 escalated headcounts have been accounted for and shall be converted to authorized time-limited headcounts.

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.

If the agency's total authorized headcount decreases from Fiscal Year 2025 to Fiscal Year 2026, it will be the agency's discretion as to what headcounts are removed.

**SECTION 4.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the Department of Marine Resources shall maintain complete accounting and personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds appropriated under this act and that such records shall be in the same format and level of detail as maintained for Fiscal Year 2025. It is further the intention of the Legislature that the agency's budget request for Fiscal Year 2027 shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided during the Fiscal Year 2026 budget request process.



**SECTION 5.** Each Marine Conservation Officer and Supervisor shall be furnished an allowance for uniforms not to exceed Six Hundred Dollars (\$600.00) per annum.

**SECTION 6.** In addition to all other sums heretofore appropriated, the following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the State Treasury to the credit of the Tidelands Fund No. 3345200000 to the Department of Marine Resources for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the tidelands projects for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....\$ 6,390,440.00.

This amount is allocated as follows:

Total Public Access Projects.....	\$ 0.00
Total Management Projects.....	\$ 3,842,769.00
Bond Repayment .....	\$ 1,547,671.00
Prior Year Projects.....	\$ 1,000,000.00
Total Tidelands Funds.....	\$ 6,390,440.00

Each political subdivision receiving funds authorized in this section shall be held responsible for complying with Section 29-15-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, and shall be subject to an audit by the State Auditor and shall submit detailed reports beginning June 30, and every six (6) months thereafter for the duration of the project to the Department of Marine Resources on how funds authorized in this section were expended.

It is the intention of the Legislature that any political subdivision seeking to qualify for tidelands funds for the



subsequent fiscal year shall submit a proposal to the Department of Marine Resources no later than July 1, 2025. All proposals submitted will be reviewed and evaluated by the Department of Marine Resources in accordance to department plans and procedures. Multi-phased projects, multi-year projects, proposed projects with high dollar value and projects that have a record of stacking funds shall be considered as low priority projects when evaluated.

It is the intention of the Legislature that if the amount of the Tidelands funds appropriated in this act exceed the actual amount of tidelands funds available, the available funds shall be allocated on a pro rata basis between projects listed in this section.

**SECTION 7.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the department shall place any special trust funds appropriated to the department in a special trust fund and the interest earned on the principal shall be credited to the special trust fund. Monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall be retained in the special trust fund for use in the next succeeding fiscal year. The department may use the interest earned on the fund to pay reasonable costs for administering the fund and related projects.

**SECTION 8.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the Department of Marine Resources has the authorization to move tidelands funds between approved projects upon request from entity and proper completion of Form TTF-6 documentation.



**SECTION 9.** It is the intention of the Legislature for the Department of Marine Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality to continue with any agency partnerships, including grant agreements, that provide environmental projects to restore Mississippi's natural resources in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

**SECTION 10.** It is the intention of the Legislature that whenever two (2) or more bids are received by this agency for the purchase of commodities or equipment, and whenever all things stated in such received bids are equal with respect to price, quality and service, the Mississippi Industries for the Blind shall be given preference. A similar preference shall be given to the Mississippi Industries for the Blind whenever purchases are made without competitive bids.

**SECTION 11.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, One Hundred Fourteen Million Eight Hundred Thirty-three Thousand Five Hundred Eighty-two Dollars (\$114,833,582.00) is provided for the funding of the following prior year Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) projects for FY 2026:

(a) To assist the City of Waveland with Center City Infrastructure Improvements - Sewer.....\$ 4,000,000.00

(b) To assist the City of D'Iberville with Working Waterfront Marina Expansion Project Phase II..... \$ 2,500,000.00

(c) To assist the City of Ocean Springs with





191 Washington Avenue and Front Beach Utility  
 192 Improvement..... \$ 1,200,000.00  
 193 (d) To assist the City of Gautier with  
 194 Marin Bluff and Hickory Hills Sewer Improvements... \$ 2,701,150.00  
 195 (e) To assist the City of Moss Point with  
 196 Riverfront Coastal River Protection..... \$ 3,750,000.00  
 197 (f) To assist the City of Moss Point with  
 198 Storm Water Park..... \$ 118,500.00  
 199 (g) To assist the Jackson County Utility  
 200 Authority with Poticaw Road Sewer Extension..... \$ 1,200,000.00  
 201 (h) To assist Mississippi State University  
 202 with Fixed Lab Equipment..... \$ 865,000.00  
 203 (i) To assist the Diamondhead Water and  
 204 Sewer District Sewer Improvements Phase III..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 205 (j) To assist the Hancock County Water and  
 206 Sewer District with Asbestos Water Pipe Replacement  
 207 And Port Bienville Water Improvements..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 208 (k) To assist the Kiln Utility and Fire  
 209 District with Hwy 603 Sewer Expansion from  
 210 Hwy 43 To Cuevas Town Road..... \$ 2,394,530.00  
 211 (l) To assist The Nature Conservancy with  
 212 Using Brood Stock Reefs to Enhance Oyster  
 213 Production on Commercial Leases..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 214 (m) To assist the City of Ocean Springs  
 215 with Front Beach Bulkhead..... \$ 1,600,000.00



216 (n) To assist the City of Long Beach with  
 217 the Small Craft Harbor Eastern Bulkhead  
 218 Improvements..... \$ 2,500,000.00  
 219 (o) To assist the Department of Marine  
 220 Resources with Oyster Spat..... \$ 2,000,000.00  
 221 (p) To assist the Department of Marine  
 222 Resources with Oyster Cultch..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 223 (q) To assist the City of Pass Christian with  
 224 Highway 90 Hurricane Mitigation Improvements..... \$ 2,810,000.00  
 225 (r) To assist the Department of Marine  
 226 Resources with artificial reef construction..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 227 (s) To assist the City of Pass Christian  
 228 with Sanitary Sewer Pump Station Repairs..... \$ 2,270,000.00  
 229 (t) To assist the Department of Marine  
 230 Resources with MS Reef Fish Monitoring and  
 231 Assessment..... \$ 250,000.00  
 232 (u) To assist the City of Biloxi with  
 233 White Avenue Storm Water Outfall Improvements ..... \$ 1,277,500.00  
 234 (v) To assist the National Oceans and  
 235 Applications Research Center with Mitigation of  
 236 Hurricane Impacts on Municipal Harbors ..... \$ 2,370,376.00  
 237 (w) To assist the University of Southern  
 238 Mississippi with the Marine Aquaculture  
 239 Demonstration Center..... \$ 3,163,823.00  
 240 (x) To assist the City of Gulfport with



241 Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades..... \$ 1,725,000.00  
 242       (y) To assist the Southern Mississippi  
 243 Planning and Development District with  
 244 Mississippi Coastal Map Revisions..... \$ 800,000.00  
 245       (z) To assist the Institute for Marine  
 246 Mammal Studies with the Dolphin and Sea Turtle  
 247 Hospital and Rehabilitation Center..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 248       (aa) To assist the City of Pascagoula with the  
 249 Live Oak Corridor Drainage to Remedy Flooding..... \$ 2,000,000.00  
 250       (bb) To assist the City of Gulfport with  
 251 the North Gulfport Wastewater Treatment Plant  
 252 UV Disinfection..... \$ 376,650.00  
 253       (cc) To assist the Hancock County Utility  
 254 Authority with the Stennis Space Center  
 255 Wastewater Conveyance Project..... \$ 7,934,956.00  
 256       (dd) To assist the City of Long Beach with  
 257 the Small Craft Harbor Eastern Bulkhead  
 258 Improvements..... \$ 583,835.00  
 259       (ee) To assist the City of Pass Christian  
 260 with the West Breakwater Wall Hurricane  
 261 Mitigation Improvements..... \$ 2,518,900.00  
 262       (ff) To assist the Department of Marine  
 263 Resources with Oyster Spat..... \$ 1,756,128.00  
 264       (gg) To assist the Institute for Marine  
 265 Mammal Studies with Monitoring and Evaluation of



266 Sea Turtle Nesting in Mississippi..... \$ 856,365.00  
 267 (hh) To assist the University of Southern  
 268 Mississippi with the Mississippi Coastal Fishery  
 269 Resource Assessment..... \$ 55,110.00  
 270 (ii) To assist the Hancock County Port and  
 271 Harbor Commission with Sewer Construction and  
 272 Improvements to Site 1 at Port Bienville  
 273 Industrial Park..... \$ 1,749,220.00  
 274 (jj) To assist the University of Southern  
 275 Mississippi with Oak Island Oyster Company in  
 276 the Development and Testing of an Off Bottom  
 277 Oyster Structure..... \$ 1,195,571.00  
 278 (kk) To assist Jackson County with Coastal  
 279 Roadway Hurricane Protection..... \$ 750,000.00  
 280 (ll) To assist the Institute for Marine  
 281 Mammal Studies with Monitoring/Gauging Habitat  
 282 Suitability for Dolphins and Turtles..... \$ 1,298,793.00  
 283 (mm) To assist the Kiln Utility District  
 284 with Jourdan River Shores Sewer Improvements  
 285 Phase II..... \$ 2,163,216.00  
 286 (nn) To assist Harrison County with Sand  
 287 Beach Outfall Coordination..... \$ 1,568,001.00  
 288 (oo) To assist the City of Ocean Springs  
 289 with Sewer Rehabilitation..... \$ 1,960,000.00  
 290 (pp) To assist the Department of Marine



291 Resources with Oyster Cultch..... \$ 1,000,000.00  
 292 (qq) To assist the City of Pass Christian with  
 293 Highway 90 Hurricane Mitigation Improvements..... \$ 1,092,205.00  
 294 (rr) To assist Coastal Mississippi with  
 295 the promotion of the Seafood Industry and its  
 296 Economic Contributions to the state..... \$ 444,941.00  
 297 (ss) To assist the City of Diamondhead with  
 298 Drainage, Flood Prevention and Water Quality  
 299 Improvements Phase II..... \$ 1,908,664.00  
 300 (tt) To assist Jackson County with East  
 301 Beach Outfalls/Shoreline Protection.....\$ 1,710,000.00  
 302 (uu) To assist the City of Gautier with  
 303 Hickory Hills/Lagrange Water Quality and  
 304 Stormwater Improvements..... \$ 2,790,271.00  
 305 (vv) To assist the City of Biloxi with  
 306 Keegan Bayou Restoration..... \$ 2,520,000.00  
 307 (ww) To assist the Department of Marine  
 308 Resources with the Coffee Creek Outfall Pavilion... \$ 419,256.00  
 309 (xx) To assist the City of Long Beach with  
 310 Small Craft Harbor Southern Quay Bulkhead  
 311 Improvements..... \$ 2,554,000.00  
 312 (yy) To assist the Department of Marine  
 313 Resources with Bonnet Carre Spillway Mitigation.... \$ 926,879.00  
 314 (zz) To assist the City of D'Iberville with  
 315 the Working Waterfront and Seafood Harbor



316	Project.....	\$	500,000.00
317	(aaa) To assist Mississippi State University		
318	with the Evaluation and Monitoring of Marine Mammal		
319	and Sea Turtles after Bonnet Carre Spillway		
320	opening.....	\$	691,428.00
321	(bbb) To assist the American Shrimp Processors		
322	Association with the Shrimp Processors Feasibility		
323	Study.....	\$	586,126.00
324	(ccc) To assist the Jackson County Utility		
325	Authority with Septic System Abatements.....	\$	1,258,817.00
326	(ddd) To assist the University of Southern		
327	Mississippi with the Mississippi Coastal Fishery		
328	Resource Assessment.....	\$	650.00
329	(eee) To assist the Department of Marine		
330	Resources with the Katrina Key Expansion.....	\$	183,425.00
331	(fff) To assist the Secretary of State with		
332	the Broadwater Marina Restoration.....	\$	3,578,591.00
333	(ggg) To assist the City of Pass Christian		
334	with Sewer Pump Station Repairs.....	\$	342,585.00
335	(hhh) To assist the City of Diamondhead with		
336	Drainage, Flood Prevention and Water Quality		
337	Improvements.....	\$	1,080,108.00
338	(iii) To assist the Department of Marine		
339	Resources with the Bonnet Carre and Mid Breton		
340	Response.....	\$	477,407.00



341           (jjjj) To assist the City of Ocean Springs  
 342 with the Front Beach Pub Access and Storm Water  
 343 Mitigation Improvements..... \$ 1,569,365.00  
 344           (kkk) To assist the City of Pass Christian  
 345 with Phase II of the Gravity Sewer System  
 346 Improvements..... \$ 4,387,486.00  
 347           (lll) To assist the Department of Marine  
 348 Resources with the Off Bottom Oyster  
 349 Aquaculture..... \$ 1,219,050.00  
 350           (mmm) To assist the Department of Marine  
 351 Resources with the Pelican Key Beneficial  
 352 Use Site..... \$ 348,220.00  
 353           (nnn) To assist the Department of Marine  
 354 Resources with Phase II of the Katrina Key  
 355 Expansion..... \$ 400,000.00  
 356           (ooo) To assist the Jackson County Board  
 357 of Supervisors with the Pascagoula Beach Open  
 358 Channel Outfalls..... \$ 1,339,000.00  
 359           (ppp) To assist the Department of Marine  
 360 Resources with GOMESA project management,  
 361 development and mitigation..... \$ 699,023.00  
 362           (qqq) To assist the Department of Marine  
 363 Resources with Bonnet Carre Response..... \$ 4,636.00  
 364           (rrr) To assist the City of Pass Christian  
 365 with Sanitary Sewer Pump Station Repairs..... \$ 901,375.00



366           (sss) To assist Hancock County with Atlantic  
 367 Street Sewer Improvements..... \$   102,929.00  
 368           (ttt) To assist the City of Long Beach with  
 369 Small Craft Harbor SE Bulkhead Improvements..... \$   280,214.00  
 370           (uuu) To assist the Kiln Utility District  
 371 with the Jordan Shores Sewer Force Main  
 372 Relocation..... \$       99,852.00  
 373           (vvv) To assist the City of Biloxi with  
 374 the Point Cadet Living Shoreline..... \$   756,537.00  
 375           (www) To assist the Department of Marine  
 376 Resources with MS Reef Fish Monitoring and  
 377 Assessment..... \$       43,074.00  
 378           (xxx) To assist Hancock County Utility  
 379 Authority with Oak Harbor Sewer Improvements..... \$ 2,719,248.00  
 380           (yyy) To assist Hancock County Port and  
 381 Harbor Commission with Port Bienville Conservation  
 382 Management..... \$   235,327.00  
 383           (zzz) To assist the City of Pascagoula  
 384 with Buena Vista Area Drainage..... \$   482,340.00  
 385           (aaaa) To assist the City of Pass Christian  
 386 with Gravity Sewer System Improvements Phase I..... \$   784,482.00  
 387           (bbbb) To assist the City of Pascagoula with  
 388 Point Park Pier Repair/Improvements..... \$       31,971.00  
 389           (cccc) To assist the Department of Marine  
 390 Resources with GOMESA project management,





391 development and mitigation..... \$ 472,003.00  
 392 (dddd) To assist the Department of Marine  
 393 Resources with the Coffee Creek Outfall..... \$ 21,906.00  
 394 (eeee) To assist the Department of Marine  
 395 Resources with the Coffee Creek water quality..... \$ 28,073.00  
 396 (ffff) To assist Jackson County Board of  
 397 Supervisors with the Front Beach Erosion Control... \$ 640,243.00  
 398 (gggg) To assist the Department of Marine  
 399 Resources with water testing for Seafood  
 400 Consumption Safety..... \$ 45,262.00  
 401 (hhhh) To assist the Department of Marine  
 402 Resources with artificial reef construction..... \$ 31,397.00  
 403 (iiii) To assist the Department of  
 404 Environmental Quality with water quality..... \$ 837,804.00  
 405 (jjjj) To assist the University of Southern  
 406 Mississippi with the Ocean Enterprise Project..... \$ 24,788.00  
 407 **SECTION 12.** It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
 408 Department of Marine Resources shall have the authority to expend  
 409 funds in an amount not to exceed Ten Million Dollars  
 410 (\$10,000,000.00) from funds for the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security  
 411 Act (GOMESA) that may become available to the agency in fiscal  
 412 year 2026 in accordance with the rules and regulations of the  
 413 Department of Finance and Administration in a manner consistent  
 414 with the escalation of federal funds.



415           **SECTION 13.** It is the intention of the Legislature that none  
416 of the funds provided herein shall be used to pay certain  
417 utilities for state furnished housing for any employees. Such  
418 utilities shall include electricity, natural gas, butane, propane,  
419 cable and phone services. Where actual cost cannot be determined,  
420 the agency shall be required to provide meters to be in compliance  
421 with legislative intent. Such state furnished housing shall  
422 include single-family and multi-family residences but shall not  
423 include any dormitory residences. Allowances for such utilities  
424 shall be prohibited.

425           **SECTION 14.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the  
426 funds herein appropriated shall be expended in compliance with  
427 Section 27-104-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, that no state agency  
428 shall incur obligations or indebtedness in excess of their  
429 appropriation and that the responsible officers, either personally  
430 or upon their official bonds, shall be held responsible for  
431 actions contrary to this provision.

432           **SECTION 15.** With the funds appropriated herein, the  
433 Department of Marine Resources is authorized to make payments for  
434 expenses incurred during prior fiscal years for an amount not to  
435 exceed Four Hundred Eight Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-seven Dollars  
436 and Forty Cents (\$408,657.40).

437           **SECTION 16.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by  
438 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the  
439 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon



440 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal  
441 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the  
442 proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

443       **SECTION 17.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
444 and after July 1, 2025.

