

By: Representatives Deweese,
Bennett, Creekmore IV, Currie,
McGee, Mickens, Read, Scott,
Turner

To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 17

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES OF THE
2 DEPARTMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026.

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

4 **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
5 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State General
6 Fund not otherwise appropriated, to the Department of Child
7 Protection Services for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025,
8 and ending June 30, 2026.....\$ 136,486,724.00.

9 **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
10 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in any special fund in
11 the State Treasury to the credit of the Department of Child
12 Protection Services which is comprised of special source funds
13 collected by or otherwise available to the department for the
14 support of the various divisions of the department, for the
15 purpose of defraying the expenses of the department for the fiscal
16 year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....
17\$ 177,899,292.00.



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

FUNDING:

General Funds:	\$ 63,813,836.00
Special Funds:	\$ 61,075,742.00
Total Funds:	\$ 124,889,578.00

PERSONAL SERVICES:

Employee Salaries, Wages, and	
Fringe Benefits:	\$ 118,645,099.00
Progressions:	\$ 0.00
Vacancy Funding:	\$ 6,244,479.00
Total Personal Services:	\$ 124,889,578.00

AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

Permanent:	1,507
Time-Limited:	412

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

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



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

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

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

61 If, at the time the agency takes any action to change
62 "Personal Services," the State Personnel Board determines that the
63 agency has taken or will take an action that would cause the
64 agency to exceed the funds appropriated in this act when
65 annualized for Fiscal Year 2026 or increase the need for "Personal
66 Services" for Fiscal Year 2027, when annualized, the State
67 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.

The Legislature authorized six (6) new headcounts, which are included in the authorized headcount above for Fiscal Year 2026.

New Headcount Authorized:

Attorney Family - 6

SECTION 4. It is the intention of the Legislature that the Department of Child Protection Services 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. 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 6. The Department of Child Protection Services is authorized to expend available funds on technology or equipment upgrades or replacements when it will generate savings through efficiency or when the savings generated from such upgrades or replacements exceed expenditures thereof.

SECTION 7. Of the funds appropriated in Section 1, herein to the Department of Child Protection Services, it is the intention of the Legislature that Ninety-three Thousand Six Hundred One Dollars (\$93,601.00) shall be allocated to the Mississippi Children's Trust Fund supported from General Fund court assessments.

SECTION 8. Of the funds appropriated by this act, pursuant to Section 97-3-54.9, Mississippi Code of 1972, Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) is provided for maintaining a 24-hour hotline that is to be manned at all times, and for a



143 coordinator to work with the Department of Public Safety, and to
144 contract with outside agencies or service providers to organize
145 for the provision of specialized services, including counseling
146 services and other appropriate care to children who have been
147 victims of commercial and sexual exploitation or human
148 trafficking.

149 **SECTION 9.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 1 and
150 Section 2, an amount not to exceed Five Million Four Hundred
151 Thirty-one Thousand Six Hundred Ninety-two Dollars (\$5,431,692.00)
152 may be expended for the Department of Child Protection Services
153 for Kinship Care Payments as authorized by Section 43-15-17,
154 Mississippi Code of 1972.

155 **SECTION 10.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 1, Eleven
156 Million Eighty-six Thousand Two Hundred Thirty-nine Dollars
157 (\$11,086,239.00) is appropriated to maintain the Adoption
158 Assistance and Congregate Care Homes Maintenance Payments and One
159 Million Seven Hundred Eleven Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-nine
160 Dollars (\$1,711,959.00) is provided to maintain the Foster Home
161 Maintenance Payments. It is the intent of the Legislature that
162 these funds be expended for said purpose.

163 **SECTION 11.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
164 necessary, is reappropriated out of any money in the Capital
165 Expense Fund not otherwise appropriated for the Department of
166 Child Protection Services for the purpose of reauthorizing the
167 expenditure of Capital Expense Fund, as reappropriated in HB 1794,



2024 Regular Session, for information technology system
developments for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and
ending June 30, 2026.....\$ 2,500,000.00.

Notwithstanding the amount reappropriated under this section,
the amount that may be expended under the authority of this
section shall not exceed the unexpended balance of the funds
remaining as of June 30, 2025, from the amount authorized for the
previous fiscal year. In addition, this reappropriation shall not
change the purpose for which the funds were originally authorized.

SECTION 12. Notwithstanding any other provision, the
Department of Child Protection Services shall have the authority
to escalate its headcount for any additional operational needs
related to Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds, upon approval
of the Department of Finance and Administration and the State
Personnel Board.

SECTION 13. The money herein appropriated shall be paid by
the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the
credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon
warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal
Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the
proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

SECTION 14. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2025.

