MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION 2025

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

To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 22

AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING THE EXPENSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026.

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

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 Mississippi Department of Insurance for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026............. ....$ 13,553,624.00.

SECTION 2. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated out of any money in any special fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Mississippi Department of Insurance which is comprised of special source funds collected by or otherwise available to the department, for the support of the various offices of the department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026........$ 28,630,000.00.

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:	$	11,212,940.00
Special Funds:	$	0.00
Total Funds:	$	11,212,940.00
PERSONAL SERVICES:		
Employee Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits:	$	10,593,935.00
Progressions:	$	0.00
Vacancy Funding:	$	619,005.00
Total Personal Services:	$	11,212,940.00
AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:		
Permanent:		131
Time-Limited:		0

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

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

With the funds herein appropriated, it shall be the agency's responsibility to ensure that no single personnel action or combination of personnel actions, when annualized, exceeds the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriation for "Personal Services" with the exception of escalated funds. Further, it shall be the agency's responsibility to ensure that funds required to be appropriated 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.

If, at the time the agency takes any action to change "Personal Services," the State Personnel Board determines that the agency has taken or will take an action that would cause the agency to exceed the funds appropriated in this act when annualized for Fiscal Year 2026 or increase the need for "Personal Services" for Fiscal Year 2027, when annualized, the State 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 Mississippi Department of Insurance 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. In compliance with the "Mississippi Performance Budget and Strategic Planning Act of 1994," it is the intent of the Legislature that the funds provided herein shall be utilized in the most efficient and effective manner possible to achieve the intended mission of this agency. Based on the funding authorized, this agency shall make every effort to attain the targeted performance measures provided below:

Performance Measures	FY2026 Target
Lic & Reg MS Ins Co's & Agents	
Number of (Producer, Etc) Licenses Issued	150,000
Average Cost per License Issued	100.00
Number of Agent's C/A's Issued	580,000
Average Cost per Agent C/A Issued	25.00
Number of Requests for Assistance	24,500
Average Cost per Customer I/C Addressed	55.00
Number of Fire Marshal Fire Investigations	538
Cost per Fire Marshal Investigation	900.00
Number of Fire Marshal Inspections	8,000
Average Cost per Fire Marshal Inspection	60.00
Liquefied Compressed Gas	
Number of Accidents/Injuries/Deaths Due to Incidents Involving LCG	1
Number of Inspections	7,000
Average Cost per Inspection	105.00
Number of Safety Training Schools/Seminars	225
Average Cost per Safety Training School	160.00

A reporting of the degree to which the performance targets set above have been or are being achieved shall be provided in the agency's budget request submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee for Fiscal Year 2027.

SECTION 6. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 1, Fifteen Thousand Seventy-nine Dollars ($15,079.00) is provided for the Mississippi Fire Personnel Minimum Standards and Certification Board.

SECTION 7. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 1, funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Dollars ($20,000.00) is provided and shall be expended to pay the annual dues for the National Conference of Insurance Legislators.

SECTION 8. It is the intention of the Legislature that none of the funds appropriated above shall be expended unless members of the Mississippi House of Representatives and Mississippi Senate are notified at least five (5) days prior to a public ceremony announcing the award of any grant in their district or any public announcement or ceremony regarding any project for which the Legislature has made funds available. Any signage regarding any public event or project shall include the following language: "Funds were made available for this project by the Mississippi State Legislature."

SECTION 9. 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 10. Within the limits of the funds available to the Mississippi Insurance Department for such purpose, the Commissioner of Insurance for the Mississippi Insurance Department may grant a paid internship to students pursuing junior or senior undergraduate level year coursework toward a bachelor's degree in risk management insurance or graduate level coursework towards a master's degree in business administration. Those applicants deemed qualified by the Mississippi Department of Insurance shall receive funds that may be used to pay for tuition, books and related fees to pursue their degree. It is the intent of the Legislature that the paid internship program shall be used as incentive for risk management insurance careers at the Mississippi Insurance Department.

SECTION 11. Of the funds appropriated in Section 1, Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($250,000.00) is provided for the State Fire Marshal's Office for fire safety prevention and services, including, but not limited to, fire protection supplies and materials, smoke alarms, and public service announcements providing fire prevention information.

SECTION 12. Of the funds provided in Section 2, Three Million Dollars ($3,000,000.00) is provided from the Mississippi Volunteer Firefighter Length-of-Service Awards Program Fund. These funds are provided for the Mississippi Length-of-Service Award Program (LOSAP) established in Section 45-11-271 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.

SECTION 13. Of the funds provided in Section 2 of this act, Eleven Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($11,500,000.00) or so much thereof as may be necessary, is provided for Municipal Fire Protection annual payments to towns and cities.

SECTION 14. Of the funds provided in Section 2 of this act, Eleven Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($11,500,000.00) or so much thereof as may be necessary, is provided for County Volunteer Fire Department annual payments to counties.

SECTION 15. Of the funds provided in Section 2 of this act, Five Hundred Thousand Dollars ($500,000.00) or so much thereof as may be necessary, is provided for authorized payments from the Mississippi First Responders Health and Safety Trust Fund.

SECTION 16. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 2, the following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State Treasury to the credit of the Propane Education and Research Program Fund, for the purpose of research and development of more cost effective uses of propane and on educational programs, safety programs, and market development of propane for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026............$ 130,000.00.

SECTION 17. Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, the following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in any special fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Rural Fire Truck Matching Assistance Fund which was created in Section 17-23-1 (4), Mississippi Code of 1972 to the Mississippi Department of Insurance for the Rural Fire Truck Matching Assistance Program, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026...........$ 2,000,000.00.

As a condition of expending the funds provided in this section, the Mississippi Department of Insurance shall recognize all obligations in the State's accounting system of record as soon as the recipient of funds has confirmed their acceptance.

SECTION 18. 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 any special fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Rural Fire Truck Fund to the Mississippi Department of Insurance for the purposes allowed in Section 17-23-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026...... ....$ 7,500,000.00.

As a condition of expending the funds provided in this section, the Mississippi Department of Insurance shall recognize all obligations in the State's accounting system of record as soon as the recipient of funds has confirmed their acceptance.

SECTION 19. 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 warrants upon requisitions signed by the proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

SECTION 20. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2025.