MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION 2025

By: Representatives Oliver, Arnold, Boyd (19th), Hines, Mangold, Massengill, Read, Roberson, Scoggin

To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 43

AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING THE EXPENSES OF THE MISSISSIPPI AUTHORITY FOR EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION 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 Authority for Educational Television for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026...................................$ 4,713,545.00.

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 Mississippi Authority for Educational Television which is comprised of special source funds collected by or otherwise available to the Authority, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Authority for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026...$ 9,921,012.00.

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:	$	4,713,545.00
Special Funds:	$	1,836,823.00
Total Funds:	$	6,550,368.00

PERSONAL SERVICES:

Employee Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits:	$	5,949,472.00
Progressions:	$	0.00
Vacancy Funding:	$	600,896.00
Total Personal Services:	$	6,550,368.00

AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

Permanent:	80
Time-Limited:	7

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. Funds appropriated herein shall first be used for the continuation of a full and complete broadcast schedule of educational and instructional, professional growth, and public service programs, with the production of new films and programs to be secondary thereto.

SECTION 5. It is the intention of the Legislature that the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television 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 6. Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 2, Two Million One Hundred Eighteen Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-six Dollars ($2,118,966.00) shall be derived from the Education Enhancement Fund deposited pursuant to Sections 27-65-75 and 27-67-31, Mississippi Code of 1972.

SECTION 7. No part of the funds appropriated herein shall be transferred to, expended by, or used, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of any public relations, publicity or publication activities of any other state agency, department or officer, nor shall any personnel paid or equipment purchased with funds appropriated hereby be transferred or assigned to any other state agency, department or officer for public relations, publicity or publication activities of such office.

SECTION 8. It is the intention of the Legislature that the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television shall have the authority to expend funds in the Capital Equipment Replacement Revolving Fund, in accordance with Section 37-63-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, for the purpose of purchasing technical equipment for operating the educational radio and television facilities.

SECTION 9. 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
Content Operations	
Number of Locally Produced TV Programs	100
Number of Locally Produced Radio Programs	1,092
Number of Monthly Average Number of Web Site Users	25,000
Percent of Radio Broadcasts and TV Alerts During Times of Emergency	100.00
Education Services	
Percent Increase of Users Accessing MPB's Online Resources for Pre-K Children and Families	15.00
Number of Students Participating in the DEN Classroom	2,000
Number of School Districts Participating in the DEN Classroom	30
Number of Teachers Taking e-Learning Courses	1,300
Number of Teacher Continuing Education Units (CEUs) Provided by e-Learning	

Courses Offered	3,500
Number of Educators Attending MPB Resource Workshops Involving PBS and MPB Programs/Content	200
Technical Services	
Number of Transmitters On Air	8
On-Air Reliability	99.95
Number of IT Help Desk Orders Filled	835
Administration	
Number of Community Engagements/Outreach Events	350
Number of State Agency Partners	40
New Grant Dollars Acquired	75,000.00

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 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. It is the intention of the Legislature that an amount equal to One Dollar and Fifty Cents ($1.50) per square foot shall be paid to the Executive Office of the State Board of Institutions of Higher Learning to defray utility costs.

SECTION 12. It is the intention of the Legislature that the Authority for Educational Television may fund a program to focus on the manufacturing industry in Mississippi.

SECTION 13. Mississippi Authority for Educational Television is authorized to accept and expend any grant, donation, or contribution from any individual, public, or private organization, or government entity for purposes of defraying the operational costs of the department. Such grants, donations or contributions shall be received and expended under the rules and regulations of the Department of Finance and Administration in a manner consistent with the escalation of federal funds not to exceed Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00).

SECTION 14. Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, the following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is derived from the Education Enhancement Fund pursuant to Sections 27-65-75 and 27-67-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, for tower maintenance and upgrades...$ 1,500,000.00.

SECTION 15. The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is reappropriated out of any money in the Education Enhancement Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the Educational Television Authority for the purpose of reauthorizing the expenditure of Education Enhancement Funds as authorized in House Bill No. 1824, 2024 Regular Session, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026..............$ 899,202.00.

This reappropriation is made for the purpose of reauthorizing the expenditure of funds as allocated herein:

a) Tower maintenance and upgrades.............$ 175,394.00.

b) Digitalization of Educational Content and Mississippi History........................$ 522,968.00.

c) Production of a Medgar Evers documentary....................................$ 200,840.00.

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