



Week of February 27, 2023

This was the ninth week of the 2023 Legislative Session. The deadline for House committees to report general bills originating from the Senate occurred Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. Any Senate bills that did not make it out of committee died. Members worked on these Senate bills on the House floor, and the deadline for these bills to be passed is next Wednesday, March 8.

[Senate Bill 2781](#) would create the Mississippi Access to Maternal Assistance Program under the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Child Protective Services and the Division of Medicaid. The program would provide information and services related to pregnancy, childbirth and childcare for expectant mothers and new parents. The House passed the bill by a vote of 113-4 and has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2323](#) would allow for consolidation and collaboration among community hospitals around the state. The bill passed initially with little debate by a vote of 107-2, but several members asked for unanimous consent to change their vote on the bill, making the final tally 90-22. SB 2323 has been returned to the Senate for concurrence or to invite conference.

Contract workers employed by the State of Mississippi would be allowed to purchase the base plan of the State and School Employees' Health Insurance Plan under [Senate Bill 2615](#). The worker must pay full price of the plan without contribution from their employer, and employers must offer this to any state contract worker who works at least 130 hours per month. SB 2615 passed the House 88-17.

[Senate Bill 2623](#) would create the Mississippi State and School Employees' Life and Health Insurance Plan Task Force to study the current insurance plans and make recommendations about possible changes. The bill passed 110-6 and has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2700](#) would provide homestead exemption for unremarried surviving spouses of military members killed on active duty or training. SB 2700 passed unanimously by a vote of 117-4.

The Mississippi Vulnerable Persons Abuse Registry would be created under [Senate Bill 2652](#). The bill is the Senate equivalent to House Bill 1392, which passed unanimously earlier in the session. SB 2652 passed by a vote of 118-1.

[Senate Bill 2140](#), or the National Security on State Devices and Networks Act, would regulate what could be downloaded to a state-issued device. This includes any information technology that could pose a security risk to the United States and/or the State of Mississippi. The bill passed 117-2.

Several bills from the Local and Private committee were also taken up this week. The bills mostly dealt with tourism taxes in municipalities and counties across the state.

The House will continue to work on bills originating from the Senate until the deadline next Wednesday. All Senate bills approved by the House will be sent back with changes to the Senate where they can concur with the changes or invite conference. There are more than 60 Senate bills remaining on the House calendar that must be dealt with by next Wednesday.

Visitors this week included the American Red Cross; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; Mississippi Delta Community College; the Mississippi Main Street Association; fourth graders from Mannsdale Upper Elementary School; the National Champion Northwest Rankin High School Cheer Squad; and the 3A State Champion Raleigh High School Football Team.