



Week of April 1, 2024

This was the fourteenth week of the 2024 legislative session. The deadline for House committees to report general bills originating from the Senate occurred Tuesday, April 2. Any Senate bills that did not make it out of committee died. Members debated general Senate bills on the House floor, and the deadline for these bills to be passed is next Wednesday, April 10. The House took up more than 60 Senate bills this week including the following:

[Senate Bill 2689](#) would replace the state subject area testing requirements in high schools with alternative assessments, like the ACT. Currently, high school students must pass tests on Algebra, American History, Biology and English. The bill passed 103-6, and it has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2349](#) would require schools to adopt and implement cardiac emergency response plans. The House adopted [Amendment 1](#) which would allow schools to accept gifts or donations for the purchase of automated external defibrillators (AEDs). SB 2349 passed unanimously 121-0 and has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2339](#) would allow American Sign Language to be counted as a foreign language credit for high school graduation requirements. The bill passed unanimously 121-0 and has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2244](#) would allow foster care children to have free access to museums and state parks, as well as free transcripts from public universities and junior colleges. The bill passed by a unanimous vote of 120-0.

[Senate Bill 2577](#) would create a criminal penalty for a person creating and disseminating a deepfake or digitization of a candidate 90 days before an election. A deepfake is a video in which a person has been digitally altered to appear as someone else, typically with malicious intent. The bill is similar to [House Bill 1689](#), which passed the House earlier this session. SB 2577 passed unanimously 120-0 and has been returned to the Senate.

[Senate Bill 2441](#) would prohibit the distribution or sale of certain alternative nicotine products, like an electronic cigarette or vape, that cannot be marketed or sold under federal law or FDA rule. A [strike-all amendment](#) was introduced creating the "Mississippi Tobacco Harm Reduction Act of 2024;" however, a point of order was raised saying that the amendment was not germane to the original bill. The point of order was well taken, and the strike-all was removed from the bill. SB 2441 passed 115-0.

The Ways and Means Committee also took up several bills from the Senate Finance Committee including a bill to move the Back to School sales tax holiday to the second Friday in July ([SB 2470](#)); a bill to allow cigar shops to sell alcohol on the premises ([SB 2567](#)); a bill to extend the repealer on tax credits for qualified charitable organizations ([SB 2476](#)); a bill to amend the qualifications for the Mississippi Main Street Grant Program ([SB 2696](#)); and a bill to define the authority of demolition and removal of structures in the Capitol Complex Improvement District ([SB 2917](#)).

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 50 Senate bills remaining on the House calendar that must be dealt with by Wednesday.

On Wednesday, the House was visited by the family of the late singer-songwriter and Pascagoula native Jimmy Buffett. His sister Lucy Buffett and cousin Mark Lumpkin were presented with [House Concurrent Resolution 16](#), which celebrates his legacy and expresses sympathy upon his passing.

Other visitors this week included Friends of Mississippi Veterans, Tupelo Young Republicans, Leadership Jackson County, South Jones High School Band, Mississippi Young Bankers and the Mississippi Children's Museum.