



Week of February 26, 2024

Committees met frequently during the ninth week of the legislative session, as next Tuesday's deadline to have House Bills out of their corresponding committees quickly approaches. After Tuesday, March 5, no additional general bills will be added to the House calendar for consideration. Members will also meet in session for longer periods to discuss the bills that make it out of committee. Despite most work still happening in committees, members took up several bills on the House floor this week.

House Medicaid Chairwoman Missy McGee (R – Hattiesburg) presented [House Bill 1725](#), or Healthy Mississippi Works. The act would direct the Mississippi Division of Medicaid to seek a federal waiver to allow coverage for persons described in the Affordable Care Act. The persons included in the expansion are 19 to 64-year-olds whose income is not greater than 138 percent of the federal poverty level. They must also work 20 hours or more a week, be a full-time college student or be enrolled in a workforce training program. HB 1725 passed by a vote of 99-20, and it has been referred to the Senate Medicaid Committee.

Two bills that would affect package retailers were introduced this week. [House Bill 328](#) would increase the number of package retailer's permits a person or entity may own from one to three. No location could be within 100 miles of another location held by the same permittee. HB 328 passed 65-28. [House Bill 329](#) would authorize local authorities of a wet jurisdiction to permit package retail sales on Sunday. HB 329 passed 68-31. Both bills have been held on a motion to reconsider.

[House Bill 1354](#) would increase the amount of state revenue bonds to assist with the construction of a new warehouse for the Alcoholic Beverage Control Division. The proposed site of the new warehouse would be at the Holmes County Industrial Park, the approximate geographical center of the state. HB 1354 passed 107-7.

[House Bill 903](#) would prohibit the manufacture and possession of machine gun conversion devices. These "Glock switches" or "auto sears" can easily change a semiautomatic handgun or rifle into a fully automatic weapon. The bill is named in honor of fallen George County Sheriff's Deputy Jeremy Malone who was gunned down during a routine traffic stop in January. HB 903 passed 112-8 and has been sent to the Senate.

Sexual extortion would become illegal under "Walker's Law," or [House Bill 1196](#). Sextortion refers to when a person entices another into sharing explicit images or videos and then threatens to post the material online, usually to extort money or sexual favors from the victim. HB 1196 passed 116-0.

[House Bill 1665](#) would allow for incentives for property development within the Capitol Complex Improvement District (CCID). HB 1665 passed 109-1 and has been sent to the Senate.

[House Bill 1378](#) would allow an honorably discharged veteran aged 90 years or older to have an exemption on all ad valorem taxes on a homestead property. The bill passed unanimously by a vote of 120-0 and has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

Two Representatives presented bills for the first time before the House. Representative Kenji Holloway (D – Carthage) presented [House Bill 702](#), which would authorize the Department of Transportation to form public-private partnerships including naming rights. HB 702 passed 120-0. Representative Justis Gibbs (D – Jackson) presented [House Bill 1669](#), which would revise the qualifications for assistant teachers. HB 1669 passed 118-0.

Governor Tate Reeves delivered his fifth State of the State address to a joint session of the Legislature on Monday night. In his speech, Reeves spoke of the two Mississippi Major Economic Impact projects passed earlier this year, and he encouraged the Legislature to continue focusing on economic development, infrastructure and education.

On Wednesday, the House presented Ameshya Williams-Holliday with [House Resolution 37](#). The resolution commends and congratulates the former Jackson State standout for many accomplishments, including being the first Mississippi HBCU player drafted by the WNBA.

Other visitors this week included NASA’s Stennis Space Center; the Blue Mountain School Girls Basketball Team; the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; the Association of Mississippi Midwives; Mississippi Farm Bureau; and the Mississippi State Troopers Association.