



Week of January 22, 2024 2024 Second Extraordinary Session

This was the fourth week of the 2024 Legislative Session.

On Wednesday, January 24, Governor Tate Reeves called an extraordinary session of the Legislature on Thursday. This was his second special session in seven days, and it was dedicated to another major economic development project.

“Project Atlas,” which was revealed to be Amazon Web Services, is a \$10 billion corporate capital investment, the largest in state history, and is expected to bring 1,000 jobs to Mississippi. The project will include hyperscale data center complexes in two Madison County industrial parks, one near the Nissan plant and one near I-220 in Ridgeland.

The package from the state includes training grants, site development support, public infrastructure commitments and certain tax incentives.

Upon gaveling in at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, the House Appropriations Committee introduced two bills: [House Bill 1](#) and [House Bill 2](#). The bills create the Project Atlas Fund in the State Treasury and appropriate \$44 million to the Mississippi Development Authority to fund the project. Both bills passed the House with bipartisan support and were sent to the Senate.

The Senate Finance Committee introduced [Senate Bill 2001](#), which outlines the project and provides incentives to Amazon Web Services. Some of the state commitments include a 10-year, 100 percent corporate income tax exemption and 30-year rolling state tax exemptions. SB 2001 reached the House floor on Thursday afternoon to little debate. An [amendment](#) was introduced, but it was tabled. SB 2001 passed the House 120-2.

Governor Reeves is expected to sign the three bills into law in the next week. The House adjourned sine die from the special session on Thursday afternoon.

The House also took up [House Concurrent Resolution 11](#), which would restore the ballot initiative process in Mississippi. The new process would require signatures of eight percent of registered voters for a measure to be placed on the ballot. Citizens would not be able to make changes to the state constitution, abortion laws, the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) or any local or special laws. The Legislature would also have the power to place an amended version of the initiative on the ballot. These exceptions were the source of debate on the House floor on Wednesday. Opponents argued that the stipulations were limiting citizens’ voices and their chance to participate in direct democracy, while

proponents of the resolution said that this was still giving power back to the voters. After two amendments were tabled, HCR 11 passed by a vote of 80-40 and has been sent to the Senate. The previous ballot initiative was struck down in May 2021 by the Mississippi Supreme Court.