



Week of January 8, 2024

This was the second week of the 2024 Legislative Session. On Friday, Speaker Jason White made the much-anticipated announcement of committee assignments. With this announcement, legislators will now begin meeting in their respective committees. The deadline for general bill introductions is not until Monday, February 19, and committees will meet more frequently after this deadline.

On Thursday, January 11, former Speaker Philip Gunn, along with dozens of lawmakers, colleagues, friends and family, gathered on the southwest side of the State Capitol grounds for a tree dedication ceremony. During the ceremony, remarks were delivered by former Chief of Staff Nathan Wells and Gunn's successor, Speaker Jason White. An invocation was given by Dr. Greg Belser, Gunn's pastor at Morrison Heights Baptist Church. Gunn also delivered what he deemed his "tree speech" where he thanked his family, colleagues and staff for their support and guidance. Planting a tree at the Capitol upon leaving office is a tradition that dates back many years, and it is open only to speakers and lieutenant governors, except in very rare circumstances. The tree chosen by the 61st Speaker was a 15-foot red oak. Capitol curator Brenda Davis and Schoggen Scapes, Inc. worked to secure the tree, which came from a farm in south Mississippi.

The House passed [House Resolution 6](#) congratulating Randy C. Ginn upon his retirement as Colonel/Director of the Mississippi Highway Patrol and Assistant Commissioner of the Mississippi Department of Public Safety. Colonel Ginn was joined by family and friends on Thursday as the House presented him with HR 6. He served with the Mississippi Highway Patrol for 36 years.

The second Inauguration of Governor Tate Reeves was held Tuesday morning before a joint session of the House and Senate on the south steps of the Capitol. In his inaugural address, Governor Reeves spoke of progress in education, tax cuts and economic development, while also highlighting areas in need of improvement such as college graduates leaving the state to pursue careers.

Visitors to the Capitol this week included Mississippi Municipal League, Lowndes Young Leaders and Leadership Vicksburg.