

By: Representatives Scott, Bailey, Banks,
Blackmon, Broomfield, Buck, Burnett, Clarke,
Flaggs, Hines, Middleton, Myers, Straughter,
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To: Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 1639

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 57-1-52 AND 57-1-55, MISSISSIPPI
2 CODE OF 1972, TO CREATE AN OFFICE OF WORKFORCE SAFETY, EDUCATION
3 AND TRAINING WITHIN THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, TO BE
4 HEADED BY AN OFFICER KNOWN AS THE MISSISSIPPI WORK COMMISSIONER;
5 TO PROVIDE FOR POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE OFFICE; AND FOR RELATED
6 PURPOSES.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 57-1-52, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
9 amended as follows:

10 57-1-52. (1) There is hereby created the Mississippi
11 Development Authority, whose principal offices shall be located in
12 Jackson, Mississippi.

13 (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall be organized
14 into the following offices:

15 (a) Office of Economic Development;

16 (b) Office of Community Development;

17 (c) Office of Support Services; and

18 (d) Office of Workforce Safety, Education and Training.

19 (3) The department shall be headed by an executive director,
20 who shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the
21 Governor. The appointment of the executive director shall be made
22 with the advice and consent of the Senate. The executive director
23 may assign to the appropriate offices such powers and duties as
24 deemed appropriate to carry out the department's lawful functions.

25 (4) The executive director of the department shall appoint
26 heads of offices, who shall serve at the pleasure of the executive
27 director. The executive director shall have the authority to
28 organize the offices established by subsection (2) of this section
29 as deemed appropriate to carry out the responsibilities of the

30 department. The organization charts of the department shall be
31 presented annually with the budget request of the Governor for
32 review by the Legislature.

33 **SECTION 2.** Section 57-1-55, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
34 amended as follows:

35 57-1-55. (1) The Mississippi Development Authority shall
36 have the following general powers and duties: To develop and
37 manage programs which enhance the climate for economic growth
38 through assistance to private sector businesses, local communities
39 and individuals, and through an extensive national and
40 international marketing effort.

41 (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall have the
42 following general powers and duties with respect to economic
43 development:

44 (a) To plan, supervise and direct an active program of
45 solicitation of industries to locate within the state;

46 (b) To prepare, maintain and disseminate information
47 which is needed by companies in evaluating site locations;

48 (c) To consult with, advise and assist prospective
49 industries wishing to locate within the state;

50 (d) To encourage new or expanding industries, which
51 will add to the economy, to locate within the state;

52 (e) To maintain a coordinated liaison function with
53 other development groups, including state and federal agencies,
54 and planning and development districts, utility companies,
55 chambers of commerce and railroads;

56 (f) To assist communities and counties within the state
57 in preparation for economic growth;

58 (g) To assist new and existing business and industry
59 and encourage their development and expansion;

60 (h) To plan and conduct a nationwide advertising
61 program promoting the state to prospective industry. Any contract
62 entered into for such purposes shall be advertised, bid and

63 accepted in accordance with the same procedure as prescribed for
64 the advertisement and acceptance of bids for the purchase of
65 commodities and contracts for public purchases under Chapter 7,
66 Title 31, Mississippi Code of 1972;

67 (i) To work with economic development agencies of the
68 federal government in areas of industrial development and provide
69 information to industrial prospects regarding the availability of
70 federal funds and assistance;

71 (j) To work with the Department of Corrections,
72 pursuant to the provisions of Section 47-5-501 et seq., in
73 identifying and evaluating acceptable industries and businesses
74 and in acting as an agent of the Department of Corrections by
75 communicating with such concerns and aggressively soliciting their
76 participation in the Correctional Industries Work Program;

77 (k) To perform related work as required;

78 (l) To disseminate information about financial and
79 other programs of the Mississippi Development Authority that will
80 assist in the creation or expansion of industries processing wood
81 products in this state;

82 (m) To market processed and raw agricultural products
83 domestically and abroad;

84 (n) To aid in the establishment of business incubation
85 centers by private business interests, not for profit
86 corporations, and/or governmental entities. The department may
87 provide funds by contract for the establishment of business
88 incubation centers and may contract for space in which business
89 incubation centers will be located. Business incubation centers
90 are defined as facilities and support services that encourage the
91 establishment of successful small businesses by providing a
92 short-term sheltered environment. The department may solicit and
93 accept grants and other financial aid or support from private or
94 public sources to aid in the development of business incubation

95 centers. In addition, advice and assistance to established
96 business incubation centers may be provided by the department; and
97 (o) To employ licensed real estate brokers and
98 appraisers necessary for the industrial development of any real
99 estate under the ownership or control of the Mississippi
100 Development Authority. Any contract entered into for such
101 purposes shall be advertised, bid and accepted in accordance with
102 the same procedure as prescribed for the advertisement and
103 acceptance of bids for the purchase of commodities and contracts
104 for public purchases under Chapter 7, Title 31, Mississippi Code
105 of 1972.

106 (3) The Executive Director of the Mississippi Development
107 Authority shall appoint the head of the Office of Workforce
108 Safety, Education and Training, and that person shall be known as
109 the Mississippi WORK Commissioner. The primary mission of the
110 commissioner is to improve workplace safety, worker education and
111 training, and to reduce the unemployment rate in the state. The
112 commissioner shall have the following general powers and duties.

113 (a) To review and analyze methods of making workplaces
114 in the State of Mississippi safer for employees;

115 (b) To review and analyze methods of providing
116 occupational training and education for Mississippi workers;

117 (c) To consult with, advise and assist Mississippi
118 businesses and industries in accomplishing their responsibilities
119 to employees; and

120 (d) To aid the appropriate employment agencies of the
121 state in lowering the unemployment rate in the state.

122 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
123 and after July 1, 2004.