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To: Universities and
Colleges; Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 1034

1 AN ACT TO ENACT THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION REVITALIZATION
2 ACT OF 2006; TO MAKE LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; TO CREATE THE SPECIAL
3 TASK FORCE FOR REVITALIZATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION; TO
4 PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE TASK FORCE; TO ESTABLISH WITHIN
5 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AN
6 OFFICE TO SERVE THE TASK FORCE; TO SET FORTH DUTIES AND
7 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE, AND TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI
8 DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE STAFF AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE
9 OFFICE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL FUNCTION AS AN
10 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND ANALYTICAL GROUP CHARGED WITH SETTING
11 SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE GOALS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE
12 MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION; TO REQUIRE THE HOLDING OF PUBLIC
13 HEARINGS IN THE REGION AND THE PREPARATION OF A LONG-RANGE ACTION
14 PLAN FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE REGION AND SPECIFY THE PARTS OF
15 THE PLAN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

17 **SECTION 1.** This act may be cited as the "Mississippi Delta
18 Region Revitalization Act of 2006."

19 **SECTION 2.** (1) For purposes of this act, the Mississippi
20 Delta Region, which may be hereinafter referred to as the region,
21 shall be defined as the western section of the State of
22 Mississippi that lies between the Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers,
23 encompassing in part or whole the counties of Bolivar, Carroll,
24 Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey,
25 Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington and Yazoo.

26 (2) The Legislature finds that the prospective well-being of
27 the people of the Mississippi Delta Region of the state requires
28 that the economic and other development of the region should be
29 strategically, comprehensively and exhaustively planned and that
30 the plan be systematically implemented. The Legislature further
31 finds that the state should foster open communication between
32 government and the private sectors of our economy in the
33 Mississippi Delta Region and that the state should provide a

34 policy, a vision and a framework to encourage an environment
35 conducive to the revitalization of our state's Delta region.

36 (3) The Legislature hereby declares that the public policy
37 of this state requires an overall, comprehensive and coordinated
38 plan for maximum and accelerated revitalization of the Mississippi
39 Delta Region.

40 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Special Task Force for Revitalization of
41 the Mississippi Delta Region is hereby created. The task force
42 shall be composed of twenty-one (21) members, to be appointed as
43 follows:

44 (a) Four (4) members of the Mississippi House of
45 Representatives who reside in the Mississippi Delta Region,
46 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

47 (b) Four (4) members of the Mississippi State Senate,
48 who reside in the Mississippi Delta Region, appointed by the
49 Lieutenant Governor.

50 (c) One (1) member from the state's public
51 universities, one (1) member from the state's junior colleges and
52 one (1) member from the Mississippi Delta Region who is not a
53 state legislator, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
54 Representatives.

55 (d) One (1) member from the state's public
56 universities, one (1) member from the state's junior colleges and
57 one (1) member from the Mississippi Delta Region who is not a
58 state legislator, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

59 (e) One (1) member from the membership or staffs of the
60 Mississippi Association of Supervisors and the Mississippi
61 Municipal Association. These members will be appointed to the
62 task force by the Governor from recommendations made to the board
63 by the respective organizations.

64 (f) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
65 Development Authority or his designee.

66 (g) Four (4) members to be selected by the Governor,
67 three (3) of whom shall be representatives of business or
68 entrepreneurial enterprises in the Mississippi Delta Region.

69 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that the task force
70 will be organized, selected and constituted in such a way that it
71 represents the most talented individuals who could possibly be
72 assembled to address the concerns and issues associated with the
73 revitalization of the Mississippi Delta Region. Task force
74 members shall be appointed by July 15, 2006, and the task force
75 shall have its organizational meeting no later than August 1,
76 2006. The task force shall elect from among its membership a
77 chairman and vice chairman. Terms of service of task force
78 members shall coincide with the duration of the task force.

79 (3) All persons selected for service on the task force shall
80 be creative, knowledgeable and accomplished people with the
81 capacity to contribute to the mission of the task force.
82 Vacancies on the task force shall be filled in a manner consistent
83 with original appointments.

84 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is hereby established within the Board
85 of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning an office
86 to serve the Special Task Force for Revitalization of the
87 Mississippi Delta Region. The office shall:

88 (a) Provide staff support, including an employee to
89 serve as the task force coordinator, to the task force and shall
90 organize and coordinate the work of the task force.

91 (b) Make available office space for the task force to
92 include conference room facilities.

93 (c) Be responsible for preparing and maintaining a
94 long-range plan for the revitalization and economic and other
95 development of the state's Delta region. The plan shall be
96 sufficiently broad in scope so as to address all regional, state,
97 national and international economic, demographic, education, work
98 force training, community, housing, public health, crime, natural

99 resource and infrastructure factors relating to the overall
100 status, revitalization and development of the Mississippi Delta
101 Region.

102 (d) Work in coordination with the Mississippi
103 Development Authority in all aspects of serving the task force.

104 (2) The Mississippi Development Authority shall provide any
105 staff support to the office that it or the task force may request.

106 **SECTION 5.** The mission and role of the special task force
107 shall be to function as an independent research and analytical
108 group charged with setting measurable, achievable and significant
109 goals to revitalize the Mississippi Delta Region. The task force
110 shall conduct public hearings in the region and make
111 recommendations regarding such goals and present findings and
112 detailed recommendations which will enable the region to achieve
113 the stated goals. Recommendations of the task force shall be
114 specific to the extent that actions needed are explicitly set out
115 and supported with in-depth analyses as to the contributions such
116 actions would have on the revitalization of the region. All
117 recommendations shall be accompanied by specific requests with
118 respect to allocation of resources, including any additional
119 funding necessary to fund the revitalization activities.

120 **SECTION 6.** With research and recommendations prepared by the
121 task force, the office shall prepare a long-range action plan for
122 the revitalization of the region, which shall consist of five (5)
123 parts as provided in this act.

124 **SECTION 7.** Part I of the plan will identify specific,
125 quantifiable goals to be accomplished in the next succeeding
126 five-, ten- and twenty-year periods. Before proposing the goals
127 required for Part I of the plan, at least three (3) public
128 hearings shall be held in each of the northern, central and
129 southern portions of the region, in order to receive public input
130 on the goal setting process and deliberations pertaining to that
131 process.

132 The goals proposed by the office shall be reasonable,
133 challenging, achievable and shall be expressed in measures of
134 achievement that would represent comparative and significant
135 economic progress and revitalization for the region.

136 **SECTION 8.** Part II of the economic development plan shall
137 include:

138 (a) An inventory and analysis of the region's
139 competitive advantages and an inventory and analysis of factors
140 which tend to retard economic and other development in the region;

141 (b) Identification and analysis of state, national and
142 international economic trends affecting the region's development;

143 (c) An analysis and evaluation of the state's taxing
144 effort as it affects the region's economic development and other
145 efforts and an analysis of how economic development goals and
146 objectives in the region relate to projected short- and long-term
147 state and local revenues dedicated to the region and to the
148 possible and potential impact on the region's revenue structure;

149 (d) An identification and analysis of key factors
150 affecting economic development in the region;

151 (e) An identification and analysis of factors affecting
152 industrial location and decisions affecting expansion of existing
153 business and industry within the region;

154 (f) An analysis of the region's incentive programs and
155 economic development strategies and a comparison with other
156 regions of the state;

157 (g) An analysis of the region's work force and of the
158 economic and educational conditions that the work force will face
159 in future years;

160 (h) An analysis of and assessment of the minority
161 business and commercial activity, capability, potential and needs
162 in the region;

163 (i) An analysis of and assessment of income in the
164 region by various income groups to provide the analytical base for

165 developing programs and recommendations to address low income high
166 unemployment problems in the region;

167 (j) An analysis and assessment of programs in other
168 states and in the federal government which seek to foster,
169 encourage and assist minority involvement in and contributions
170 toward economic development. The programs to be assessed shall
171 include, but not be limited to, set aside procurement programs.

172 **SECTION 9.** (1) Part III of the economic development plan
173 shall provide a procedure for monitoring the implementation of
174 efforts proposed by the task force and the plan. In formulating
175 this procedure, the office will survey, identify and analyze every
176 government program and private resource and activity that is
177 available to, that is being applied toward or that contributes to
178 the accomplishment of the goals set in the long-range plan. The
179 resources and programs of local, state and federal government and
180 private business shall be identified and analyzed to determine the
181 specific areas in which they contribute to achievement of the
182 overall goals.

183 (2) Each agency and institution of state government involved
184 in economic, demographic, education, work force training,
185 community, housing, public health, crime, natural resources and
186 infrastructure aspects relating to the overall revitalization and
187 development of the Mississippi Delta Region is directed to prepare
188 and submit to the office and the Mississippi Development
189 Authority, work programs covering its activities in the relevant
190 aspects. The office shall specify a uniform format for agencies
191 to follow in preparing their work programs. These work programs
192 shall cover in general the next five (5) years of the plan and, in
193 significant detail, the upcoming fiscal year. Work programs shall
194 be submitted by October 1, 2006, for fiscal year 2007 by those
195 agencies identified as being required to submit work programs.

196 **SECTION 10.** Part IV of the plan shall be an analysis and
197 evaluation of materials in Parts II and III of the plan. This

198 phase of the plan shall also make an overall evaluation of the
199 relative contributions that the resources and efforts identified
200 in Part III are making toward achievement of the overall goals.
201 This phase of the plan shall contain specific recommendations for
202 inclusion in the region's efforts:

203 (a) Specific programs for accelerating the region's
204 overall economic development through greater results from the
205 state's agricultural resources;

206 (b) Specific programs for rural areas of the region and
207 those areas and identifiable groups of people with the highest
208 unemployment and lowest per capita incomes;

209 (c) Specific programs for international trade and the
210 attraction of foreign investment through development of
211 specialized, university-based or other programs;

212 (d) The specific niches that Mississippi has and on
213 which it should focus development efforts or those niches the
214 region should seek to develop; and

215 (e) Specific minority enterprise assistance and
216 development programs that would be needed and recommended.

217 **SECTION 11.** (1) Part V of the economic development plan
218 shall consist of recommendations. The recommendations shall be
219 based on Part IV of the plan and shall seek to improve in every
220 possible and feasible manner the coordination and implementation
221 of all activities and programs outlined and identified as required
222 in Part III of the plan.

223 (2) The plan shall make recommendations regarding new
224 initiatives and new programs and the alteration or expansion of
225 existing programs as deemed necessary to achieve the goals
226 established. The recommendations shall state specifically what is
227 to be done, who is to do it and how it is to be done and shall
228 also set out the cost benefits of each recommendation.

229 (3) The office, in consultation with the task force and the
230 Mississippi Development Authority, shall develop a legislative

231 package containing any statutory actions required to implement the
232 goals established in the state long-range plan for economic
233 development. The legislative package shall be prepared and
234 presented in bill format.

235 **SECTION 12.** All parts of the plan shall be completed no
236 later than December 1, 2006. A preliminary report on the status
237 of the plan shall be made to the Joint Legislative Budget
238 Committee in November 2006.

239 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
240 and after July 1, 2006.