

By: Representatives Currie, Stamps, Hobgood- To: Agriculture
Wilkes, Crawford, Scoggin, Brown (20th),
Williamson, Arnold

HOUSE BILL NO. 280
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A STUDY COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF
2 STUDYING THE PURCHASING, ACQUIRING, LEASING OR HOLDING AN INTEREST
3 IN AGRICULTURAL LAND BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT; TO PROVIDE THE NINE
4 MEMBERS OF THE STUDY COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE THE INFORMATION THAT
5 THE STUDY COMMITTEE SHALL STUDY, TO REQUIRE A REPORT TO BE
6 PROVIDED TO THE LEGISLATURE BY DECEMBER 1, 2023; AND FOR RELATED
7 PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created a study committee for the
10 purpose of studying the purchasing, acquiring, leasing or holding
11 an interest in agricultural land by foreign government. The
12 committee shall be comprised of the following nine (9) members:

13 (a) The Commissioner of Department of Agriculture and
14 Commerce, or his or her designee;

15 (b) The Attorney General, or his or her designee;

16 (c) The Chairman of the House Judiciary A Committee;

17 (d) The Chairman of the Senate Judiciary A Committee;

18 (e) The Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee;

19 (f) The Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee;

20 (g) One (1) person to be appointed by the Governor;



21 (h) One (1) person to be appointed by the Lieutenant
22 Governor; and

23 (i) One (1) person to be appointed by the Speaker of
24 the House of Representatives, who shall be a representative of
25 Farm Bureau.

26 (2) Appointments to the study committee shall be made within
27 thirty (30) days of the effective date of this act. At the first
28 meeting, the committee shall elect from among its membership a
29 chairman, a vice chairman and any other officers determined to be
30 necessary, and shall adopt rules for transacting business and
31 keeping records. The study committee shall develop and report its
32 findings to the Legislature on or before December 1, 2023.

33 (3) A majority of the members of the study committee shall
34 constitute a quorum. In the adoption of rules, resolutions and
35 reports, and in the election of a chairman, vice chairman and any
36 other officers determined to be necessary, an affirmative vote of
37 a majority of the members present shall be required.

38 (4) To effectuate the purposes of this act, any department,
39 division, board, bureau, committee, institution or agency of the
40 state, or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request
41 of the chairman of the study committee, provide the facilities,
42 assistance, information and data needed to enable the study
43 committee to carry out its duties.

44 (5) The study committee shall study at least the following
45 information:



46 (a) The total amount of agricultural land that is under
47 foreign ownership;

48 (b) The percentage change in foreign ownership of
49 agricultural land in Mississippi, by year, over the past ten (10)
50 years;

51 (c) The purpose to which foreign-owned agricultural
52 land in Mississippi is being put to use currently, including any
53 significant recent changes or trends in the use to which
54 foreign-owned agricultural land in Mississippi is being put to
55 use;

56 (d) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent
57 changes in, foreign ownership of water rights in Mississippi;

58 (e) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent
59 changes in, foreign ownership of water desalination facilities in
60 Mississippi;

61 (f) Information regarding the extent of, and any recent
62 changes in, foreign ownership of energy production, storage or
63 distribution facilities in Mississippi;

64 (g) The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and
65 Commerce's assessment of the impact of any recent changes in
66 foreign ownership of agricultural land in Mississippi, water
67 rights and food security;

68 (h) Any current prohibitions on the foreign ownership
69 of Mississippi land and why such prohibitions are not being
70 enforced; and



71 (i) Any legislative, regulatory or administrative
72 policy changes the department recommends in light of the
73 information in the report.

74 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
75 and after July 1, 2023.

