

By: Representatives Summers, Karriem,
Sanders, Thompson, Hulum

To: Public Health and Human
Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 744

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI CHILD POVERTY TASK FORCE; TO
2 PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE THE
3 DUTIES OF THE TASK FORCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi Child
6 Poverty Task Force to review and make recommendations on how to
7 reduce overall child poverty in Mississippi and how to reduce the
8 number of Mississippi households that are asset limited, income
9 constrained, employed.

10 (2) The task force shall be composed of the following
11 members:

12 (a) Two (2) members of the Senate, to be appointed by
13 the Lieutenant Governor, with one (1) such member being a Democrat
14 and one (1) being a Republican;

15 (b) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives to
16 be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, with
17 one (1) such member being a Democrat and one (1) being a
18 Republican;



19 (c) One (1) representative from the Children's
20 Foundation of Mississippi;

21 (d) One (1) representative from Springboard to
22 Opportunities;

23 (e) One (1) representative from the United Way;

24 (f) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
25 Development Authority, or his or her designee; and

26 (g) The Executive Director of Accelerate Mississippi,
27 or his or her designee.

28 (3) The duties of the task force shall include the
29 following:

30 (a) Identifying and evaluating poverty's root causes
31 and contributing factors in Mississippi, the needs of those in
32 poverty in Mississippi, and the effectiveness of efforts on all
33 levels that have been undertaken or are currently being undertaken
34 to address poverty; and developing strategies for supporting or
35 otherwise improving the efficacy of those efforts, including
36 programmatic effectiveness and administrative efficiencies;

37 (b) Identifying and evaluating the nature and scope of
38 poverty's impact on various locations and communities throughout
39 Mississippi and what response actions would be most effective in
40 helping each of those impacted areas, and developing strategies
41 for implementing those response actions;

42 (c) Identifying and evaluating what financial and other
43 resources are available on all levels to combat poverty in



44 Mississippi, and developing strategies for securing, coordinating,
45 augmenting, and deploying those resources;

46 (d) Identifying and evaluating key barriers to upward
47 mobility among populations in poverty in Mississippi, and
48 developing strategies for overcoming these barriers, focusing on
49 improved economic development and opportunities for upward
50 mobility among families and individuals experiencing poverty in
51 Mississippi;

52 (e) Developing strategies for increasing public
53 awareness of poverty in Mississippi, its causes and effects, the
54 resources available to those impacted by it, and the actions that
55 can be taken to combat it;

56 (f) Developing routine communication and
57 information-sharing protocols between members of the task force
58 and stakeholders on all levels;

59 (g) Identifying key stakeholders in impacted areas and
60 performing outreach to ensure stakeholders are informed, educated,
61 and empowered. Stakeholder outreach will include, but is not
62 limited to, community leaders, partner organizations, tribal
63 governments, local government officials, and other elected
64 officials representing the impacted areas;

65 (h) Performing outreach to the general public regarding
66 poverty in Mississippi and the work of the task force;

67 (i) Creating measurable goals and objectives along an
68 established timeline;



69 (j) Recommending changes in Mississippi law and
70 policy-related changes that can be implemented by governmental and
71 nongovernmental agencies, relevant to fighting poverty in
72 Mississippi;

73 (k) Examining proposals to create, expand or strengthen
74 tax proposals that have an impact on children; and

75 (l) Meeting with William Winter for Racial
76 Reconciliation officials to offer strategies to acknowledge and
77 address racial disparities in policy decision-making.

78 (4) (a) Appointments to the task force shall be made within
79 thirty (30) days after the effective date of this act. Within
80 fifteen (15) days thereafter on a day to be designated jointly by
81 the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Lieutenant
82 Governor, the task force shall meet and organize by selecting from
83 its membership a chair and a vice chair. The vice chair shall
84 also serve as secretary and shall be responsible for keeping all
85 records of the task force. A majority of the members of the task
86 force shall constitute a quorum. In the selection of its officers
87 and the adoption of rules, resolutions and reports, an affirmative
88 vote of a majority of the task force shall be required. All
89 members shall be notified in writing of all meetings, and those
90 notices shall be mailed at least fifteen (15) days before the date
91 on which a meeting is to be held.



92 (b) The task force shall meet at least once quarterly
93 and provide quarterly reports to the Legislature on its
94 activities.

95 (c) The task force shall make a final report of its
96 findings and recommendations, including any recommended
97 legislation, to the Legislature not later than July 1, 2025, at
98 which time the task force will be dissolved.

99 (5) Members of the task force shall receive no compensation
100 for their service on the task force, but may receive reimbursement
101 for mileage and actual expenses as provided in Section 25-3-41,
102 Mississippi Code of 1972, to the extent that funds are available
103 for that purpose.

104 (6) The Mississippi Development Authority shall provide the
105 staff and other support necessary for the task force to perform
106 its duties.

107 (7) To effectuate the purposes of this act, any department,
108 division, board, bureau, committee, institution or agency of the
109 state, or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request
110 of the chairman of the task force, provide the facilities,
111 assistance, information and data needed to enable the task force
112 to carry out its duties.

113 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
114 and after its passage.

