

By: Representative Crawford

To: Judiciary A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1515

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO COMMENCE AN
 2 INVESTIGATION INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES IN
 3 MISSISSIPPI RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION AND
 4 DISTRIBUTION OF VACCINES PURPORTED TO PREVENT COVID-19 INFECTION,
 5 SYMPTOMS AND TRANSMISSION; TO DECLARE CERTAIN FINDINGS; TO SPECIFY
 6 CERTAIN CRIMINAL OFFENSES THAT MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE SCOPE OF
 7 THE INVESTIGATION; TO REQUIRE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO SUBMIT A
 8 STATUS REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE BEFORE JANUARY 1 OF EACH YEAR
 9 THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS ONGOING, WHICH REPORT MAY NOT INCLUDE
 10 INFORMATION THAT IS CONFIDENTIAL OR POTENTIALLY THREATENING TO THE
 11 INTEGRITY OF THE INVESTIGATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature finds the following:

14 (a) The general welfare and well-being of citizens of
 15 this state depend in large measure upon the truth of
 16 advertisements, representations and suggestions publicly made by
 17 an industry selling or otherwise profiting from the distribution
 18 of a product in the state.

19 (b) Particularly important to the health of the state's
 20 citizenry is the necessity of being able to accept as truthful and
 21 scientifically supported information disseminated by



22 pharmaceutical manufacturers relating to the effectiveness of a
23 drug.

24 (c) Questions now exist regarding the veracity of
25 representations made by the pharmaceutical manufacturers of
26 COVID-19 vaccines, particularly with respect to transmission,
27 prevention, efficacy and safety.

28 (d) In many instances, Mississippians were required to
29 either take a COVID-19 vaccine or be terminated from their
30 employment when the federal government, in reliance upon
31 representations made by the pharmaceutical industry, mandated
32 certain employers require employees to be vaccinated against
33 COVID-19 as a condition of employment.

34 (2) The Legislature declares that, if found to be true, the
35 alleged wrongful actions of pharmaceutical manufacturers in
36 Mississippi relating to the development, promotion and
37 distribution of vaccines purported to prevent COVID-19 infection,
38 symptoms and transmission are criminal in nature and particularly
39 egregious to the citizens of this state and the state as a whole,
40 and as such, an extensive investigation by the state into the
41 practices of the pharmaceutical industry relating to the COVID-19
42 vaccine is fully warranted.

43 (3) The Attorney General shall commence an investigation
44 into activities in Mississippi relating to the development,
45 promotion and distribution of vaccines purported to prevent



46 COVID-19 infection, symptoms and transmission. The investigation
47 must consider any crime or wrong that relates to the following:

48 (a) Persons and entities, including, but not limited
49 to, pharmaceutical manufacturers and their executive officers, and
50 other medical associations or organizations involved in the
51 design, development, clinical testing or investigation,
52 manufacture, marketing, representation, advertising, promotion,
53 labeling, distribution, formulation, packing, sale, purchase,
54 donation, dispensing, prescribing, administration or use of
55 vaccines purported to prevent COVID-19 infection, symptoms and
56 transmission; and

57 (b) Any other criminal activity or wrongdoing that is
58 uncovered during the course of the investigation if the Attorney
59 General determines that pursuing the criminal activity or
60 wrongdoing is in the best interests of the investigation.

61 (4) Specifically, the scope of the investigation must be
62 aimed to determine if a violation of any of the following offenses
63 has occurred:

64 (a) Offenses affecting trade, business and professions
65 (Chapter 23, Title 97, Mississippi Code of 1972), and
66 particularly, Section 97-23-3, which prohibits untrue, deceptive
67 or misleading advertising;

68 (b) Offenses involving false pretenses and cheats
69 (Chapter 19, Title 97, Mississippi Code of 1972), and



70 particularly, Section 97-19-83, which prohibits fraud by mail or
71 other means of communication;

72 (c) Offenses under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt
73 Organization Act (RICO) (Chapter 43, Title 97, Mississippi Code of
74 1972);

75 (d) Offenses of conspiracy, accessories and attempts
76 (Chapter 1, Title 97, Mississippi Code of 1972); and

77 (e) Any other offense determined through the course of
78 the investigation by the Attorney General to have allegedly
79 occurred.

80 (5) In carrying out this investigation, the Attorney General
81 shall exercise all subpoena powers and enforcement provisions
82 expressly enumerated for conducting investigations under Section
83 7-5-59.

84 (6) Before January 1, 2025, and each succeeding year so long
85 as the investigation continues, the Attorney General shall submit
86 a report to the Legislature providing an update on the status of
87 the investigation. However, any information deemed confidential
88 or the release of which potentially would jeopardize the integrity
89 of the investigation may not be included in the report.

90 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
91 and after July 1, 2024.

