

By: Representative Creekmore IV

To: Public Health and Human Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 1639
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE TASK FORCE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
2 MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY; TO PROVIDE FOR THE
3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE; TO SPECIFY THE MATTERS ON WHICH THE
4 TASK FORCE SHALL GATHER INFORMATION, REVIEW, STUDY AND MAKE
5 RECOMMENDATIONS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEETINGS AND FUNDING OF THE
6 TASK FORCE; TO ASSIGN THE TASK FORCE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF
7 HEALTH FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE
8 SHALL MAKE A REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE
9 LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR BY NOVEMBER 1, 2024, INCLUDING ANY
10 RECOMMENDED LEGISLATION, AT WHICH TIME THE TASK FORCE SHALL BE
11 DISSOLVED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Task Force on the
14 Establishment of a Mississippi Delta Regional Health Authority.
15 The task force shall consist of the following twenty (20) members:

16 (a) Three (3) members appointed by the Governor, one
17 (1) from a federally qualified health center (FQHC) located in the
18 Mississippi Delta, one (1) from a rural hospital located in the
19 Mississippi Delta, and one (1) who has insurance coverage
20 experience and is a resident of the Mississippi Delta;

21 (b) Two (2) members appointed by the Lieutenant



22 Governor, one (1) from a large hospital system that operates in
23 the Mississippi Delta, and one (1) who is a financial operations
24 officer from a hospital or federal health center located in the
25 Mississippi Delta;

26 (c) Six (6) members selected by the five (5) members
27 appointed under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection, as
28 follows:

29 (i) A representative of Coahoma Community
30 College's allied health program;

31 (ii) A representative of Mississippi Delta
32 Community College's nursing program;

33 (iii) A representative of Mississippi Valley State
34 University's social work or environmental health program;

35 (iv) A representative of Delta State University's
36 Department of Management/Marketing/Business Administration,
37 Healthcare Administration program;

38 (v) An independent pharmacist who practices in the
39 Mississippi Delta; and

40 (vi) An ambulatory transportation provider in the
41 Mississippi Delta;

42 (d) The Chairman of the Public Health and Human
43 Services Committee of the House of Representatives;

44 (e) The Chairman of the Public Health and Welfare
45 Committee of the Senate;



46 (f) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives who
47 are residents of the Mississippi Delta with at least ten (10)
48 years' experience in the Legislature, appointed by the Speaker of
49 the House;

50 (g) Two (2) members of the Mississippi Senate who are
51 residents of the Mississippi Delta with at least ten (10) years'
52 experience in the Legislature, appointed by the Lieutenant
53 Governor;

54 (h) The State Health Officer or his or her designee;

55 (i) The special consultant on health care for the Delta
56 Council; and

57 (j) The Chief Executive Officer of the Community Health
58 Center Association of Mississippi.

59 (2) As used in this section, "Mississippi Delta" means and
60 includes the following Mississippi counties: Bolivar, Carroll,
61 Coahoma, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Leflore, Panola, Quitman,
62 Sharkey, Issaquena, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica, Warren,
63 Washington and Yazoo.

64 (3) The task force shall gather information, review, study
65 and make recommendations on the following, at a minimum:

66 (a) The advantages and disadvantages of having a
67 regional health authority in the Mississippi Delta to improve the
68 operations and financial health of participating community
69 hospitals;



70 (b) What type of cohesive structure of a regional
71 authority in the Mississippi Delta would best address the health
72 care needs of that region;

73 (c) How much authority should a regional health
74 authority have regarding the governing of participating community
75 hospitals in the Mississippi Delta;

76 (d) How much local authority should participating
77 community hospitals in the Mississippi Delta have to give up or
78 delegate to a regional health authority; and

79 (e) Developing a strategic plan for long-term success
80 in health outcomes for the Mississippi Delta.

81 (4) The members of the task force described in paragraphs
82 (a), (b), (f) and (g) of subsection (1) of this section shall be
83 appointed not later than thirty (30) days after the effective date
84 of this act. The members of the task force described in paragraph
85 (c) of subsection (1) of this section shall be selected not later
86 than sixty (60) days after the effective date of this act.

87 (5) The Governor shall call the first meeting of the task
88 force not later than seventy-five (75) days after the effective
89 date of this act. At its first meeting, the task force shall
90 organize by selecting from its membership a chairman and a vice
91 chairman. The vice chairman shall also serve as secretary and
92 shall be responsible for keeping all records of the task force. A
93 majority of the members of the task force shall constitute a
94 quorum. In the selection of its officers and the adoption of



95 rules, resolutions and reports, an affirmative vote of a majority
96 of the task force shall be required. All members shall be
97 notified in writing of all meetings at least seven (7) days before
98 the date on which a meeting is to be held.

99 (6) Subject to the availability of funding, the members of
100 the task force who are not legislators shall be compensated at the
101 per diem rate authorized by Section 25-3-69 and shall be
102 reimbursed in accordance with Section 25-3-41 for mileage and
103 actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.
104 Legislative members of the task force shall be paid from the
105 contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the same
106 manner as provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is
107 not in session. However, no per diem or expenses for attending
108 meetings of the task force will be paid to legislative members of
109 the task force while the Legislature is in session. No task force
110 member may incur per diem, travel or other expenses unless
111 previously authorized by vote at a meeting of the task force,
112 which action shall be recorded in the official minutes of the
113 meeting. The nonlegislative members shall be paid from any funds
114 made available to the task force for that purpose.

115 (7) The task force is assigned to the State Department of
116 Health for administrative purposes. The department shall
117 designate professional and clerical staff to assist the task
118 force.



119 (8) The task force shall make a report of its findings and
120 recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor by November 1,
121 2024, including any recommended legislation, at which time the
122 task force shall be dissolved.

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

