

By: Representatives Read, Boyd (19th)

To: Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1706  
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 27-104-321, MISSISSIPPI CODE  
2 OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND,  
3 FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO AMEND SECTION  
4 27-104-323, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DIRECT THE STATE FISCAL  
5 OFFICER TO TRANSFER TO THE CORONAVIRUS STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND  
6 THE FULL AMOUNT OF ANY INTEREST EARNED ON AMOUNTS IN THE  
7 CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND THAT ARE REMAINING IN THE  
8 LOCAL FUND ON JULY 1, 2024; TO PROVIDE THAT ANY INTEREST EARNED ON  
9 AMOUNTS IN THE CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND AFTER JULY  
10 1, 2024, SHALL BE DEPOSITED TO THE CREDIT OF THE CORONAVIRUS STATE  
11 FISCAL RECOVERY FUND; TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE FISCAL OFFICER TO  
12 TRANSFER TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANY FUNDS IN THE CORONAVIRUS  
13 LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUND THAT HAVE NOT BEEN USED FOR THE PURPOSE  
14 FOR WHICH THEY WERE RECEIVED; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 27-104-325,  
15 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE CORONAVIRUS STATE  
16 FISCAL RECOVERY LOST REVENUE FUND, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE  
17 AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-57, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
18 1972, WHICH ESTABLISHED THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI WORKFORCE  
19 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO  
20 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-205, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH  
21 ESTABLISHED THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI NURSING/ALLIED HEALTH GRANT  
22 PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD  
23 SECTION 37-153-207, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH ESTABLISHED  
24 THE ACCELERATE MISSISSIPPI PHYSICIAN RESIDENCY AND FELLOWSHIP  
25 START-UP GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO  
26 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-153-209, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH  
27 ESTABLISHED THE MISSISSIPPI ALLIED HEALTH COLLEGE AND CAREER  
28 NAVIGATOR GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO  
29 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-106-64, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH  
30 ESTABLISHED THE SKILLED NURSING HOME AND HOSPITAL NURSES RETENTION  
31 LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; TO  
32 AMEND SECTION 41-3-16.1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT  
33 FOR THE SECOND ROUND OF GRANT AWARDS UNDER THE ARPA RURAL WATER  
34 ASSOCIATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF



35 HEALTH SHALL ADD TEN POINTS TO ANY GRANT APPLICATION THAT PROMOTES  
36 THE CONSOLIDATION OF SEPARATE SYSTEMS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE  
37 DEPARTMENT SHALL ADD TEN POINTS TO ANY APPLICATION WITH AT LEAST  
38 ONE SYSTEM THAT HAS CONSOLIDATED IN THE PAST, REGARDLESS OF  
39 WHETHER THE APPLICATION WOULD RESULT IN ADDITIONAL CONSOLIDATION  
40 IN THE FUTURE; TO PROVIDE THAT NO APPLICATION WILL RECEIVE MORE  
41 THAN A TOTAL OF TEN ADDITIONAL POINTS UNDER THE PROGRAM FOR ANY  
42 PAST OR FUTURE CONSOLIDATION OF SYSTEMS; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION  
43 41-9-371, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH CREATED THE MISSISSIPPI  
44 HOSPITAL SUSTAINABILITY GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE  
45 AMENDMENT; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION 49-2-131, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
46 1972, WHICH CREATED THE MISSISSIPPI MUNICIPALITY AND COUNTY WATER  
47 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE  
48 AMENDMENT; TO PROVIDE FOR THE TRANSFER OF CERTAIN FUNDS BY THE  
49 STATE TREASURER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

51 **SECTION 1.** Section 27-104-321, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
52 brought forward as follows:

53 27-104-321. (1) All funds received by or on behalf of the  
54 State of Mississippi through the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery  
55 Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021  
56 (Public Law No. 117-2) shall be deposited into the Coronavirus  
57 State Fiscal Recovery Fund created in subsection (2) of this  
58 section.

59 (2) There is created in the State Treasury a special fund to  
60 be designated as the "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund."  
61 The special fund shall consist of funds required to be deposited  
62 into the special fund by subsection (1) of this section, funds  
63 appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legislature in any  
64 manner, and funds from any other source designated for deposit  
65 into the special fund. Monies in the fund shall only be spent  
66 upon appropriation by the Legislature and shall only be used as  
67 provided in the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section



68 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No.  
69 117-2) or as authorized by federal rule or regulation or  
70 guidelines.

71 (3) Unexpended amounts remaining in the special fund at the  
72 end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund  
73 but shall remain in the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund.  
74 Any investment earnings or interest earned on amounts in the  
75 special fund shall be deposited to the credit of the special fund.

76 **SECTION 2.** Section 27-104-323, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
77 amended as follows:

78 27-104-323. (1) All funds received by or on behalf of the  
79 State of Mississippi through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery  
80 Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021  
81 (Public Law No. 117-2) for distribution to nonentitlement units of  
82 local government shall be deposited into the Coronavirus Local  
83 Fiscal Recovery Fund created in subsection (2) of this section.

84 (2) There is created in the State Treasury a special fund to  
85 be designated as the "Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund" to  
86 be administered by the Department of Finance and Administration.  
87 The special fund shall consist of funds required to be deposited  
88 into the special fund by subsection (1) of this section, funds  
89 appropriated or otherwise made available by the Legislature in any  
90 manner, and funds from any other source designated for deposit  
91 into the special fund. The Department of Finance and  
92 Administration shall distribute the funds to the nonentitlement



93 units of local government in accordance with the Coronavirus Local  
94 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan  
95 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2) and any applicable federal  
96 guidelines. Such funds shall only be used as provided in the  
97 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the  
98 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2) or as  
99 authorized by federal rule or regulation or guidelines.

100 (3) Unexpended amounts remaining in the special fund at the  
101 end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund  
102 but shall remain in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund.  
103 The State Fiscal Officer shall transfer to the Coronavirus State  
104 Fiscal Recovery Fund the full amount of any investment earnings or  
105 interest earned on amounts in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal  
106 Recovery Fund that are remaining in the Coronavirus Local Fiscal  
107 Recovery Fund on July 1, 2024. Any investment earnings or  
108 interest earned on amounts in the \* \* \* Coronavirus Local Fiscal  
109 Recovery Fund after July 1, 2024, shall be deposited to the credit  
110 of the \* \* \* Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund created in  
111 Section 27-104-321.

112 (4) The State Fiscal Officer is authorized, in his or her  
113 discretion, to transfer to the federal government any funds in the  
114 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund that have not been used for  
115 the purpose for which they were received.

116 (5) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.



117           **SECTION 3.** Section 27-104-325, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
118 brought forward as follows:

119           27-104-325. There is created in the State Treasury a special  
120 fund to be designated as the "Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery  
121 Lost Revenue Fund," which shall consist of funds calculated based  
122 on a reduction in the state's general revenue due to the  
123 coronavirus public health emergency, made available through the  
124 Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund established by the American  
125 Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and transferred into the fund by act of  
126 the Legislature. The fund shall be maintained by the State  
127 Treasurer as a separate and special fund, separate and apart from  
128 the General Fund of the state. Unexpended amounts remaining in  
129 the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the  
130 State General Fund, and any investment earnings or interest earned  
131 on amounts in the fund shall be deposited to the credit of the  
132 fund. Monies in the fund shall be used by the Department of  
133 Finance and Administration, upon appropriation by the Legislature,  
134 for the purpose of providing government services.

135           **SECTION 4.** Section 37-153-57, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
136 brought forward as follows:

137           37-153-57. (1) There is established the Accelerate  
138 Mississippi Workforce Development Program, which shall be directed  
139 by the office for the purpose of providing education and training  
140 to citizens seeking employment in high-wage, high-demand  
141 industries in the state, including, but not limited to, the



142 nursing and healthcare fields, which were impacted by the  
143 disruption to the economy and workforce caused by COVID-19. This  
144 program shall be subject to the availability of funds appropriated  
145 by the Legislature using Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds  
146 made available under ARPA or any other funds appropriated by the  
147 Legislature.

148 (2) As used in this section, the following words have the  
149 meanings ascribed unless the context requires otherwise:

150 (a) "Recipient" means a community college, institution  
151 of higher learning, or trainee recipient of grant funding under  
152 this section.

153 (b) "Trainee" means an individual receiving training or  
154 other services through programs under this article with the goal  
155 of becoming employed in a high-wage, high-demand industry.

156 (c) "High-wage, high-demand industry" means those  
157 industries paying above Mississippi's median annual income and  
158 prioritized by the office and the four (4) local workforce areas.

159 (d) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a  
160 recipient, pursuant to this article, to include:

- 161 (i) Necessary equipment or other supplies;  
162 (ii) Curricula or other academic or training  
163 materials;  
164 (iii) Remote learning or other classroom  
165 technology;



166 (iv) Stipends for teaching staff or faculty for  
167 workforce development programs;

168 (v) Trainee support, including tuition expenses  
169 and childcare or transportation assistance;

170 (vi) Coaching or mentoring services;

171 (vii) Job placement services;

172 (viii) Apprenticeship programs; and

173 (ix) Recruitment programs.

174 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as  
175 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

176 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations  
177 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an  
178 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

179 (a) A detailed explanation of the program the applicant  
180 intends to use awarded funds to create or expand, including:

181 (i) A description of the high-wage, high-demand  
182 field or workforce shortage area the program is intended to  
183 address;

184 (ii) The number of trainees who will be served by  
185 the program; and

186 (iii) The average wage rate for trainees receiving  
187 employment after completing the program;

188 (b) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be  
189 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to  
190 the office throughout the funding commitment;



191 (c) A plan to provide data on participation and  
192 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to  
193 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

194 (d) Other relevant information as determined  
195 appropriate by the office.

196 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal  
197 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief  
198 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as  
199 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the  
200 approved program will be prioritized for approval.

201 (6) The office shall:

202 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds  
203 appropriated to the grant program;

204 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the  
205 administration of the grant program;

206 (c) Prioritize high-wage, high-skill industries,  
207 including, but not limited to, nursing jobs or other jobs within  
208 the healthcare field; and

209 (d) Coordinate with the Department of Employment  
210 Security to share information to identify individuals who were  
211 furloughed, unemployed, underemployed or otherwise displaced due  
212 to COVID-19.

213 (7) The office may use a maximum of two percent (2%) of  
214 funds allocated for this article for the administration of the  
215 grant program, to the extent permissible under federal law.





216           **SECTION 5.** Section 37-153-205, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
217 brought forward as follows:

218           37-153-205. (1) There is established the Accelerate  
219 Mississippi Nursing/Allied Health Grant Program, which shall be  
220 directed by the office for the purpose of increasing capacity in  
221 nursing and allied health training programs, including accredited  
222 paramedic programs, job sectors which were severely impacted by  
223 the disruption to the economy and workforce caused by COVID-19.

224           (2) For purposes of this section, the following words shall  
225 have the meanings ascribed herein unless the context requires  
226 otherwise:

227           (a) "Grant program" means the program established in  
228 this section, which provides funding, as determined by the office,  
229 from federal COVID-19 relief funds to sustain and increase  
230 capacity in nursing and allied health education and training  
231 programs, including accredited paramedic programs, or to help  
232 retain and graduate nursing and allied health students, at  
233 community and junior colleges or other entities facilitating  
234 healthcare-focused training programs as determined by the office.

235           (b) "Recipient" means a community or junior college or  
236 other entities facilitating healthcare-focused training programs  
237 as determined by the office.

238           (c) "Trainee" means an individual receiving training or  
239 other services through the grant program under this article with



240 the goal of becoming employed in the nursing or allied health  
241 field, including as a licensed paramedic.

242 (d) "COVID-19" means the Coronavirus Disease 2019.

243 (e) "Federal COVID-19 relief funds" means funds  
244 allocated to the State of Mississippi from the Coronavirus State  
245 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan  
246 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2).

247 (f) "High-wage, high-demand industry" means those  
248 nursing or allied health jobs, including paramedics, paying above  
249 Mississippi's median annual income and prioritized by the office.

250 (g) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a  
251 recipient under this article, to include:

252 (i) Necessary equipment or other supplies to  
253 sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied health training  
254 programs, including accredited paramedic programs;

255 (ii) Necessary infrastructure, including building  
256 renovation or construction, for increasing capacity in nursing or  
257 allied health training programs, including accredited paramedic  
258 programs;

259 (iii) Curricula or other academic or training  
260 materials to sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied  
261 health training programs, including accredited paramedic programs;

262 (iv) Remote learning or other classroom technology  
263 to sustain or increase capacity in nursing or allied health  
264 training programs, including accredited paramedic programs;



265 (v) Job placement services for nursing or allied  
266 health students and graduates, including those in accredited  
267 paramedic programs;

268 (vi) Recruitment programs for nursing or allied  
269 health students and graduates, including those in accredited  
270 paramedic programs;

271 (vii) Other services aimed at helping retain and  
272 graduate current nursing and allied health students, including  
273 those in accredited paramedic programs.

274 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as  
275 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

276 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations  
277 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an  
278 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

279 (a) A detailed explanation of the program the applicant  
280 intends to use awarded funds to create or expand, to include:

281 (i) A description of the nursing or allied health  
282 workforce shortage the program is intended to address, including  
283 specific information from hospitals, clinics, long-term care  
284 facilities or other health care providers in the region;

285 (ii) Any relevant waitlist or other information  
286 demonstrating high demand for graduates from the relevant nursing  
287 or allied health program;

288 (iii) The number of nursing or allied health  
289 students who will be served by the program; and



290 (iv) The average wage rate for nursing or allied  
291 health students receiving employment after completing the program;

292 (b) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be  
293 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to  
294 the office throughout the funding commitment;

295 (c) A plan to provide data on participation and  
296 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to  
297 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

298 (d) Other relevant information as determined  
299 appropriate by the office.

300 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal  
301 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief  
302 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as  
303 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the  
304 approved program will be prioritized for approval.

305 (6) The office shall:

306 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds  
307 appropriated to the grant program;

308 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the  
309 administration of the grant program;

310 (c) Prioritize jobs within the nursing or allied health  
311 fields which are currently experiencing staffing shortages in  
312 hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities and other health  
313 care providers across the state; and



314 (d) Prioritize jobs which are high-wage, high-demand  
315 jobs within the nursing and allied health fields, including the  
316 paramedic field.

317 (7) Seventy-five percent (75%) of the funds provided through  
318 the appropriations process for this program shall be reserved for  
319 community and junior colleges. A maximum of twenty-five percent  
320 (25%) of the funds provided through the appropriations process for  
321 this program may be awarded to recipients other than a community  
322 or junior college which facilitate healthcare-focused training  
323 programs as determined by the office.

324 **SECTION 6.** Section 37-153-207, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
325 brought forward as follows:

326 37-153-207. (1) There is established the Accelerate  
327 Mississippi Physician Residency and Fellowship Start-Up Grant  
328 Program, which shall be directed by the office for the purpose of  
329 creating new or increasing capacity in existing physician  
330 residency and fellowship programs in hospitals, which were  
331 severely impacted by the disruption to the economy and workforce  
332 caused by COVID-19.

333 (2) For purposes of this section, the following words shall  
334 have the meanings ascribed herein unless the context requires  
335 otherwise:

336 (a) "Grant program" means the program established in  
337 this section, which provides funding, as determined by the office,  
338 from federal COVID-19 relief funds to create new or increase



339 capacity in existing physician residency and fellowship programs  
340 at general acute care hospitals in the State of Mississippi which  
341 are licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health.

342 (b) "Recipient" means a general acute care hospital in  
343 the State of Mississippi which is licensed by the Mississippi  
344 State Department of Health.

345 (c) "Residency and fellowship programs" means advanced  
346 training programs in medical or surgical specialty areas which are  
347 accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical  
348 Education or a similar accreditation body.

349 (d) "COVID-19" means the Coronavirus Disease 2019.

350 (e) "Federal COVID-19 relief funds" means funds  
351 allocated to the State of Mississippi from the Coronavirus State  
352 Fiscal Recovery Fund in Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan  
353 Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2).

354 (f) "Eligible expenses" means a cost incurred by a  
355 recipient, pursuant to this article, to include:

356 (i) Equipment or other supplies necessary for  
357 accreditation;

358 (ii) Necessary infrastructure, including building,  
359 renovation or construction, for accreditation;

360 (iii) Curricula or other academic or training  
361 materials necessary for accreditation;

362 (iv) Stipends for the recruitment, hiring and  
363 development of program directors, program coordinators, faculty



364 and/or teaching staff and clinic staff necessary for  
365 accreditation; and

366 (v) Remote learning or other classroom technology.

367 (3) The Department of Employment Security shall serve as  
368 fiscal agent in administering the funds.

369 (4) Subject to appropriation by the Legislature, allocations  
370 to recipients shall be awarded by the office through an  
371 application process, which shall require the applicant to provide:

372 (a) Evidence that the applicant is in the process of  
373 preparing for accreditation, has applied for accreditation or has  
374 received accreditation for a new residency or fellowship program,  
375 or increased capacity in an existing residency or fellowship  
376 program;

377 (b) A detailed explanation of the residency or  
378 fellowship program the applicant intends to use awarded funds to  
379 create or expand, to include:

380 (i) A description of the workforce shortage the  
381 residency or fellowship program is intended to address, including  
382 specific information from health care providers in the region;

383 (ii) Any relevant waitlist or other information  
384 demonstrating high demand for medical school graduates to enter  
385 the residency or fellowship program;

386 (iii) The number of residents who will be served  
387 by the residency or fellowship program;



388 (iv) The budget for the residency or fellowship  
389 program, including a plan showing sustainability after  
390 accreditation and any required federal approval of the program;  
391 and

392 (v) The average wage rate for residents or fellows  
393 receiving employment after completing the program;

394 (c) A proposed budget on how awarded funds will be  
395 expended, including a plan to consistently report expenditures to  
396 the office throughout the funding commitment;

397 (d) A plan to provide data on participation and  
398 outcomes of the residency or fellowship program, including a plan  
399 to report outcomes to the office throughout the funding  
400 commitment; and

401 (e) Other relevant information as determined  
402 appropriate by the office.

403 (5) Applicants agreeing to commit a portion of their federal  
404 COVID-19 relief funds, if they received federal COVID-19 relief  
405 funds directly, or other state, federal or private funds as  
406 supplemental matching funds to offset the total cost of the  
407 approved program shall be prioritized for approval.

408 (6) The office shall:

409 (a) Inform each recipient of its portion of the funds  
410 appropriated to the grant program;

411 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the  
412 administration of the grant program;





413 (c) Prioritize residency or fellowship programs within  
414 medical or surgical specialties which are currently experiencing  
415 staffing shortages in hospitals, clinics, long-term care  
416 facilities and other health care providers across the state;

417 (d) Prioritize residency or fellowship programs which  
418 produce graduates in high-demand medical and surgical fields;

419 (e) Establish a schedule of application deadlines and a  
420 system for considering applications on a rotating basis; and

421 (f) Ensure that every effort be made, in accordance  
422 with the priorities in this subsection, to provide funds for the  
423 placement of one (1) resident with each recipient before  
424 considering awarding funds for the placement of additional  
425 residents in the same round of consideration.

426 **SECTION 7.** Section 37-153-209, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
427 brought forward as follows:

428 37-153-209. (1) There is established the Mississippi Allied  
429 Health College and Career Navigator Grant Program, which shall be  
430 directed by the office for the purpose of hiring professionals, or  
431 navigators, to provide individual assistance and guidance to  
432 students to assist them in many areas, from maneuvering challenges  
433 while enrolled in college programs and understanding the job  
434 market to working through course challenges, and to help retain  
435 and graduate nursing and allied health students, at community and  
436 junior colleges. Such navigators must be at least a registered  
437 nurse with at least two (2) years of experience in nursing. The



438 grant program shall be funded from monies appropriated by the  
439 Legislature for that purpose.

440 (2) The office shall prescribe the terms and conditions of  
441 the grant program. To be eligible to receive a grant from the  
442 office under the grant program, a community college shall provide  
443 the following information:

444 (a) The number of nursing or allied health students who  
445 will be served by the program;

446 (b) A plan to provide data on participation and  
447 outcomes of the program, including a plan to report outcomes to  
448 the office throughout the funding commitment; and

449 (c) Any other information that the office determines is  
450 necessary.

451 **SECTION 8.** Section 37-106-64, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
452 brought forward as follows:

453 37-106-64. (1) There is established the "Skilled Nursing  
454 Home and Hospital Nurses Retention Loan Repayment Program" for new  
455 nursing graduates to be administered by the Mississippi  
456 Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board.

457 (2) Subject to the availability of funds, an eligible  
458 applicant for an initial award must have:

459 (a) Legal residency in the State of Mississippi;

460 (b) Gained employment within the last year for the  
461 first time as a full-time licensed practical nurse or licensed  
462 registered nurse at a skilled nursing home in the State of



463 Mississippi or a general acute care hospital in the State of  
464 Mississippi that is licensed by the Mississippi State Department  
465 of Health;

466 (c) A current relevant Mississippi professional  
467 license; and

468 (d) Outstanding qualifying educational loans, received  
469 at any point during the recipients postsecondary education career,  
470 which may include the principal, interest and related expenses  
471 such as the required interest premium on the unpaid balances of  
472 government and commercial loans obtained by the recipient for  
473 educational expense.

474 (3) Persons who have received funds from state-forgivable  
475 loan programs established under Mississippi law, or who are in  
476 default or delinquent on any federal, state, local or commercial  
477 qualifying educational loan, shall not be eligible for this  
478 program.

479 (4) Recipients in the program shall be selected on a  
480 first-come, first-served basis from all eligible applicants. The  
481 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board  
482 shall renew eligible applicants approved in prior years only if  
483 the renewal applicant continues to meet the standards set forth in  
484 this act, and the renewal applicant has not received full funding  
485 provided by this subsection (4).

486 (5) Awards for recipients who are employed at a skilled  
487 nursing home or a licensed general acute care hospital in the



488 state may be a maximum of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000.00) for  
489 each year of employment up to three (3) years.

490 (6) A recipient shall not be penalized for ending employment  
491 at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute care  
492 hospital in the State of Mississippi if the recipient begins  
493 working for another skilled nursing home or licensed general acute  
494 care hospital in the State of Mississippi during the year on which  
495 the award is based.

496 (7) Awards shall be granted on a year-to-year basis, and  
497 recipients have no obligation to seek a subsequent award.

498 (8) Awards shall be paid annually, after the expiration of  
499 the year of employment for which the award was granted, to the  
500 recipient's lender or loan service provider, to be applied to the  
501 outstanding balance. Monies paid by the recipient or on the  
502 recipient's behalf toward qualifying educational loans before  
503 payment of the award shall not be eligible for reimbursement  
504 through the program.

505 (9) During the employment year for which the award is  
506 granted, a recipient shall at all times keep the State Financial  
507 Aid Board informed of any changes to the recipient's current,  
508 correct and complete employment information and status.

509 (10) Recipients who fail to maintain a relevant Mississippi  
510 professional license or fail to fulfill the year of employment on  
511 which the award was based forfeit any right to the award.



512 (11) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial  
513 Assistance Board, in collaboration with the State Board of Nursing  
514 and any other applicable state agency as determined by the  
515 Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board,  
516 shall attempt to track award recipients under this program through  
517 their third employment year, unless the recipient leaves  
518 employment at a skilled nursing home or a licensed general acute  
519 care hospital in the state at an earlier date. Data collected  
520 shall include each recipients' place of employment and any other  
521 pertinent information necessary to determine the efficacy of the  
522 program in retaining nurses in skilled nursing homes or licensed  
523 general acute care hospitals in the State of Mississippi.

524 (12) The Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial  
525 Assistance Board shall promulgate regulations necessary for the  
526 proper administration of this section, including setting a fiscal  
527 year policy for the program and application dates and deadlines.

528 (13) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2027.

529 **SECTION 9.** Section 41-3-16.1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
530 amended as follows:

531 41-3-16.1. (1) (a) The State Department of Health  
532 (department) shall establish a grant program to be known as the  
533 ARPA Rural Water Associations Infrastructure Grant Program  
534 (program) to assist rural water associations and entities in the  
535 construction of eligible drinking water infrastructure projects as  
536 provided in the Final Rule for the Coronavirus State and Local



537 Fiscal Recovery Funds as established by the federal American  
538 Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

539 (b) Rural water associations and any entity that  
540 received funding under the ARPA Rural Water Associations  
541 Infrastructure Grant Program or the Mississippi Municipality and  
542 County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program before April 14,  
543 2023, shall be ineligible for additional grants under this  
544 section.

545 (2) The program shall be funded from appropriations by the  
546 Legislature to the department from the Coronavirus State Fiscal  
547 Recovery Fund, and the department shall expend all such funds for  
548 the purposes provided in subsection (1) of this section.

549 (3) The department shall obligate the funds by the deadline  
550 set by the rules and guidelines of the United States Department of  
551 the Treasury and will adhere to the Treasury's rules and  
552 guidelines for reporting and monitoring projects funded through  
553 ARPA.

554 (4) (a) The department shall develop a system for use in  
555 ranking the grant applications received. The ranking system shall  
556 include the following factors, at a minimum: (a) the  
557 environmental impact of the proposed project; (b) the proposed  
558 project's ability to address noncompliance with state/federal  
559 requirements; (c) the extent to which the project promotes  
560 economic development; (d) the number of people served by the  
561 project (both new and existing users); (e) impacts of the proposed



562 project on disadvantaged/ overburdened communities; (f) the grant  
563 applicant's prior efforts to secure funding to address the  
564 proposed project's objectives; (g) the grant applicant's proposed  
565 contribution of other funds or in-kind cost-sharing to the  
566 proposed project; (h) the grant applicant's long-term plans for  
567 the financial and physical operation and maintenance of the  
568 project; and (i) the grant applicant's capacity to initiate  
569 construction in a timely manner and complete the proposed project  
570 by the deadline specified by rules and guidelines of the United  
571 States Department of the Treasury for ARPA funds.

572 (b) For the second round of grant awards, subject to  
573 the provisions of paragraph (d) of this subsection, the department  
574 shall \* \* \* add ten (10) points to any grant \* \* \* application  
575 that promotes the consolidation of separate systems. In order to  
576 receive the additional \* \* \* ten (10) points, the systems that  
577 will consolidate shall be in a proximity of each other as  
578 determined by the department.

579 (c) \* \* \* For the second round of grant awards, subject  
580 to the provisions of paragraph (d) of this subsection, the  
581 department shall add ten (10) points \* \* \* to any application with  
582 at least one (1) system that has consolidated after January 1,  
583 2018, and before application to this program and is otherwise  
584 eligible under this section, regardless of whether the application  
585 would result in additional consolidation in the future.



586           (d) If an application has received an additional ten  
587 (10) points under paragraph (b), it shall not receive any  
588 additional points under paragraph (c); and if an application has  
589 received an additional ten (10) points under paragraph (c), it  
590 shall not receive any additional points under paragraph (b). No  
591 application will receive more than a total of ten (10) additional  
592 points under this subsection for any past or future consolidation  
593 of systems.

594           (5) An application for a grant under this section shall be  
595 submitted at such time, be in such form, and contain such  
596 information as the department prescribes.

597           (6) (a) Upon the approval of an application for a grant  
598 under this section, the department shall enter into a project  
599 grant agreement with each grantee to establish the terms of the  
600 grant for the project, including the amount of the grant.

601                   (b) (i) For the first award of grants, the maximum  
602 amount of funds that may be provided to any rural water  
603 association or entity from all grants under the program is Two  
604 Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000.00).

605                           (ii) For the second round of grant awards, the  
606 maximum amount of funds that may be provided to any eligible  
607 association or entity from all grants under the program is Two  
608 Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00).

609           (c) Associations or entities that received funding  
610 under the first round of grant awards for this program or received





611 funding in the Mississippi Municipality and County Water  
612 Infrastructure Grant Program Act of 2022 are ineligible to receive  
613 funding under the second round.

614 (7) The department shall have all powers necessary to  
615 implement and administer the program. Of the funds appropriated  
616 to the department for the program, not more than five percent (5%)  
617 may be used by the department to cover the department's costs of  
618 administering the program.

619 (8) In carrying out its responsibilities under the program,  
620 for any contract under the purview of the Public Procurement  
621 Review Board (PPRB), the department shall be exempt from any  
622 requirement that the PPRB approve any personal or professional  
623 services contracts or pre-approve any solicitation of such  
624 contracts. This subsection shall stand repealed on July 1, 2026.

625 (9) The department shall submit an annual report regarding  
626 the program no later than December 31 of each year to the  
627 Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Chairmen of  
628 the Senate and House Appropriations Committees.

629 (10) For the purposes of this section, "entity" means:

630 (a) Any entity operating as a rural water association,  
631 regardless of whether such entities were user created, were  
632 initially organized not for profit, or have been granted  
633 tax-exempt status under state or federal law.

634 (b) Any nonprofit water or sewer provider not owned by  
635 the municipality or county and are not a Rural Water Association.



636 (c) Any entity eligible under this program shall be  
637 currently operating as a not-for-profit entity.

638 (d) "Entity" under this subsection does not include any  
639 state agency. No state agency shall be eligible under this  
640 program.

641 **SECTION 10.** Section 41-9-371, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
642 brought forward as follows:

643 41-9-371. (1) There is established the Mississippi Hospital  
644 Sustainability Grant Program which shall be administered by the  
645 State Department of Health.

646 (2) In order to strengthen, improve and preserve access to  
647 Mississippi hospital care services for all Mississippians and in  
648 recognition of the challenges incurred by Mississippi hospitals as  
649 a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, funds from the program shall be  
650 distributed, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to each  
651 hospital licensed by the State of Mississippi, except for  
652 hospitals operated by the United States Department of Veterans  
653 Affairs and hospitals operated by the State Department of Mental  
654 Health. Licensed specialty hospitals that are recognized as such  
655 by the State Department of Health, except for those excluded under  
656 this subsection, are eligible for grants under the program.

657 (3) The department shall distribute grants to each eligible  
658 hospital based upon the following formula:

659 (a) Each hospital that has fewer than one hundred (100)  
660 licensed beds and that is not classified as a critical access



661 hospital that operates an emergency department shall be eligible  
662 to receive Six Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$625,000.00)  
663 to defray the costs of providing emergency department services.

664 (b) Each rural hospital that has fewer than one hundred  
665 (100) licensed beds and that is classified as a critical access  
666 hospital that operates an emergency department shall be eligible  
667 to receive Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) to defray  
668 the costs of providing emergency department services.

669 (c) Each hospital that operates an emergency department  
670 and that has more than one hundred (100) licensed beds shall be  
671 eligible to receive One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00).

672 (d) Each hospital with fewer than two hundred (200)  
673 licensed beds with the majority of such beds being dedicated to  
674 providing specialty services such as women's health services,  
675 long-term acute care, rehabilitation or psychiatric services shall  
676 be eligible to receive Five Hundred Thousand Dollars  
677 (\$500,000.00).

678 (e) Each rural hospital with fewer than one hundred  
679 (100) licensed beds with no emergency department shall be eligible  
680 to receive Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) to defray  
681 the costs of providing access to hospital care in rural  
682 communities.

683 (f) In addition to the funds provided in paragraphs (a)  
684 through (e) of this subsection, each small rural hospital with  
685 fifty (50) beds or less which operated an emergency department



686 shall be eligible to receive Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars  
687 (\$250,000.00) to defray the costs of providing access to hospital  
688 care in rural communities.

689 (g) In addition to the funds distributed in paragraphs  
690 (a) through (c) and (e) through (f) of this subsection, any  
691 remaining funds appropriated for the purposes of this grant  
692 program shall be distributed to hospitals receiving funds in  
693 paragraphs (a) through (c) and (e) through (f) of this subsection  
694 on a pro rata amount by dividing the total amount of the remaining  
695 funds by the number of licensed beds attributable to all licensed  
696 Mississippi hospitals except for licensed beds attributable to  
697 hospitals described in paragraph (d) of this subsection and for  
698 licensed beds attributable to hospitals operated by the United  
699 States Department of Veterans Affairs and hospitals operated by  
700 the State Department of Mental Health and determining a dollar  
701 amount for each bed, and then multiplying that dollar amount by  
702 the number of licensed beds of that hospital.

703 (4) The department shall adopt such reasonable rules as  
704 necessary for the administration of the program, but shall not  
705 place additional qualification requirements on hospitals other  
706 than the minimum requirements in this section.

707 (5) The Mississippi Hospital Association shall form a work  
708 group to review the delivery of hospital services in Mississippi  
709 and shall make recommendations regarding the changes needed to  
710 sustain access to hospital care to the Lieutenant Governor,



711 Speaker of the House, Chairmen of the House and Senate Public  
712 Health Committees with copies to the Governor and the State Health  
713 Officer.

714         **SECTION 11.** Section 49-2-131, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
715 brought forward as follows:

716             49-2-131. (1) This section shall be known and may be cited  
717 as the "Mississippi Municipality and County Water Infrastructure  
718 Grant Program Act of 2022."

719             (2) There is hereby established within the Mississippi  
720 Department of Environmental Quality the Mississippi Municipality  
721 and County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program under which  
722 municipalities, counties and certain public utilities not  
723 regulated by the Public Service Commission may apply until  
724 February 1, 2023, for reimbursable grants to make necessary  
725 investments in water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to  
726 be funded by the Legislature utilizing Coronavirus State Fiscal  
727 Recovery Funds made available under the federal American Rescue  
728 Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Such grants shall be made available to  
729 municipalities and counties to be matched with the Coronavirus  
730 Local Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded or to be awarded to them under  
731 ARPA on a one-to-one matching basis. Coronavirus Local Fiscal  
732 Recovery Funds that a county transfers to a municipality or that a  
733 county or municipality transfers to a public utility not regulated  
734 by the Public Service Commission are eligible on a one-to-one  
735 matching basis. Municipalities that received less than One



736 Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in the total allocation of  
737 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds are eligible for a  
738 two-to-one match only on the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery  
739 Funds awarded or to be awarded to them under ARPA. The  
740 Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality shall only accept  
741 two (2) rounds of submissions under the Mississippi Municipality  
742 and County Water Infrastructure (MCWI) Grant Program. The second  
743 round of submissions shall be the final round. The dollar amount  
744 for professional fees that can be allocated as a part of a  
745 county's, municipality's or public utility's matching share is not  
746 to exceed four percent (4%) of the total project cost.

747 (3) For purposes of this section, unless the context  
748 requires otherwise, the following terms shall have the meanings  
749 ascribed herein:

750 (a) "MCWI Grant Program" means the Mississippi  
751 Municipality and County Water Infrastructure Grant Program.

752 (b) "ARPA" means the federal American Rescue Plan Act  
753 of 2021, Public Law 117-2, which amends Title VI of the Social  
754 Security Act.

755 (c) "State Recovery Funds" means Coronavirus State  
756 Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded through Section 602 of Title VI of  
757 the Social Security Act amended by Section 9901 of the federal  
758 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2.

759 (d) "Local Recovery Funds" means Coronavirus Local  
760 Fiscal Recovery Funds awarded through Section 603 of Title VI of



761 the Social Security Act amended by Section 9901 of the federal  
762 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2.

763 (e) "Department" means the Department of Environmental  
764 Quality.

765 (f) "Professional fees" means fees for the services of  
766 attorneys and engineering, surveying, and environmental studies.

767 (g) "Project" means the infrastructure improvements  
768 defined in an application that (i) complies with all requirements  
769 of ARPA, and (ii) is eligible for a grant award under this  
770 section.

771 (4) (a) On or before July 1, 2022, the Department of  
772 Environmental Quality shall promulgate rules and regulations  
773 necessary to administer the MCWI Grant Program prescribed under  
774 this section, including application procedures and deadlines. The  
775 department is exempt from compliance with the Mississippi  
776 Administrative Procedures Law in fulfilling the requirements of  
777 this section.

778 (b) The Department of Health shall advise the  
779 Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality regarding all such  
780 rules and regulations as related to the federal Safe Drinking  
781 Water Act.

782 (5) Funding under the MCWI Grant Program shall be allocated  
783 to projects certified by the Mississippi Department of  
784 Environmental Quality as eligible for federal funding, including,  
785 but not be limited to, the following:



786 (a) Construction of publicly owned treatment works;  
787 (b) Projects pursuant to the implementation of a  
788 nonpoint source pollution management program established under the  
789 Clean Water Act (CWA);  
790 (c) Decentralized wastewater treatment systems that  
791 treat municipal wastewater or domestic sewage;  
792 (d) Management and treatment of stormwater or  
793 subsurface drainage water;  
794 (e) Water conservation, efficiency, or reuse measures;  
795 (f) Development and implementation of a conservation  
796 and management plan under the CWA;  
797 (g) Watershed projects meeting the criteria set forth  
798 in the CWA;  
799 (h) Energy consumption reduction for publicly owned  
800 treatment works;  
801 (i) Reuse or recycling of wastewater, stormwater, or  
802 subsurface drainage water;  
803 (j) Facilities to improve drinking water quality;  
804 (k) Transmission and distribution, including  
805 improvements of water pressure or prevention of contamination in  
806 infrastructure and lead service line replacements;  
807 (l) New sources to replace contaminated drinking water  
808 or increase drought resilience, including aquifer storage and  
809 recovery system for water storage;





810 (m) Storage of drinking water, such as to prevent  
811 contaminants or equalize water demands;

812 (n) Purchase of water systems and interconnection of  
813 systems;

814 (o) New community water systems;

815 (p) Culvert repair, resizing, and removal, replacement  
816 of storm sewers, and additional types of stormwater  
817 infrastructure;

818 (q) Dam and reservoir rehabilitation, if the primary  
819 purpose of dam or reservoir is for drinking water supply and  
820 project is necessary for the provision of drinking water;

821 (r) Broad set of lead remediation projects eligible  
822 under EPA grant programs authorized by the Water Infrastructure  
823 Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act; and

824 (s) Any eligible drinking water, wastewater or  
825 stormwater project through ARPA guidelines, guidance, rules,  
826 regulations and other criteria, as may be amended from time to  
827 time, by the United States Department of the Treasury.

828 (6) The governing authority of a municipality, county or  
829 public utility that is not regulated by the Public Service  
830 Commission may submit an application for grant funds under this  
831 section if the applicant is an operator-member of Mississippi 811,  
832 Inc., as defined in Section 77-13-3. Applicants shall certify to  
833 the department that each expenditure of the funds awarded to them  
834 under this section is in compliance with ARPA guidelines,



835 guidance, rules, regulations and other criteria, as may be amended  
836 from time to time, by the United States Department of the Treasury  
837 regarding the use of monies from the State Coronavirus State  
838 Fiscal Recovery Funds. Subsequent submissions will be due by the  
839 dates established by the department.

840 (7) An application for a grant under this section shall be  
841 submitted at such time, be in such form, and contain such  
842 information as the department prescribes. Each application for  
843 grant funds shall include the following at a minimum: (a)  
844 applicant contact information; (b) project description and type of  
845 project; (c) project map; (d) estimate of population affected by  
846 the project; (e) disadvantaged community criteria (population,  
847 median household income, unemployment, current water/sewer rates);  
848 (f) estimated project cost; (g) list of match funds of direct  
849 Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds received and to be  
850 received from the federal government, a certification that such  
851 funds have been or will be used for the project detailed in the  
852 application, and documentation of commitment; (h) estimated  
853 project schedule and readiness to proceed; (i) engineering  
854 services agreement; (j) engineering reports; and (k) information  
855 about status of obtaining any required permits.

856 (8) The department must apply a system for use in ranking  
857 the grant applications received, unless the Legislature funds all  
858 eligible grant requests under the program. When applying the  
859 ranking system, the department shall apply a greater weight to



860 projects that have approved engineering/design, plans and permits  
861 if the department has deemed the project is ready to begin  
862 construction within six (6) months. Projects that are included on  
863 the municipal or county engineer's approved list and provide  
864 applicable supporting documentation shall receive additional  
865 consideration awarded to the application. The ranking system  
866 shall include the following factors, at a minimum: (a) the  
867 environmental impact of the proposed project; (b) the proposed  
868 project's ability to address noncompliance with state/federal  
869 requirements; (c) the extent to which the project promotes  
870 economic development; (d) the number of people served by the  
871 project and the number of communities the project serves; (e)  
872 impacts of the proposed project on disadvantaged/overburdened  
873 communities; (f) the grant applicant's prior efforts to secure  
874 funding to address the proposed project's objectives; (g) the  
875 grant applicant's proposed contribution of other funds or in-kind  
876 cost-sharing to the proposed project; (h) the grant applicant's  
877 long-term plans for the financial and physical operation and  
878 maintenance of the project; (i) the grant applicant's capacity to  
879 initiate construction in a timely manner and complete the proposed  
880 project by the deadline specified by the United States Department  
881 of Treasury rules for ARPA funds; (j) the extent to which the  
882 project benefits multiple political subdivisions in a regional  
883 manner; (k) the project's ability to enhance public service



884 infrastructure, including transportation and emergency access; and  
885 (1) any other factors as determined by the department.

886 (9) The grant program shall include a specific emphasis on  
887 addressing the needs of an economically disadvantaged community,  
888 including providing safe, reliable drinking water in areas that  
889 lack infrastructure, providing sewage treatment capacity in  
890 unsewered areas and providing regional development of  
891 infrastructure to serve multiple communities.

892 (10) Applications shall be reviewed and scored as they are  
893 received, unless the Legislature funds all eligible grant requests  
894 under the program. The Mississippi Department of Environmental  
895 Quality shall certify whether each project submitted is a  
896 "necessary investment" in water, wastewater, or stormwater  
897 infrastructure as defined in the American Rescue Plan Act and all  
898 applicable guidance issued by the United States Department of the  
899 Treasury. The Department of Environmental Quality shall review  
900 the lists of recommended water infrastructure projects and issue  
901 its list of recommended projects to the Mississippi Department of  
902 Health for its advice. Grant agreements shall be executed between  
903 the recipient and the Mississippi Department of Environmental  
904 Quality. All final awards shall be determined at the discretion  
905 of the executive director of the department. Any funds awarded to  
906 the City of Jackson under this section shall be deposited in the  
907 Capital City Water/Sewer Projects Fund of the State Treasury.  
908 Funds shall be obligated to a grantee upon the execution of a



909 grant agreement between the department and the approved applicant.  
910 Funds shall be made available to a grantee when the department  
911 obtains the necessary support for reimbursement. The department  
912 is authorized to conduct additional rounds of grants as needed;  
913 however, in the first round no more than forty percent (40%) of  
914 the total funds appropriated for each grant program may be awarded  
915 by the department, and the remaining funds may be awarded in the  
916 final round which shall occur no later than six (6) months from  
917 the previous round. To ensure equitable treatment between the  
918 categories of projects, no less than twenty percent (20%) awarded  
919 under this section shall be allocated to each of the three (3)  
920 categories of drinking water projects, wastewater projects and  
921 stormwater projects. In the final round, any funds not requested  
922 may be allocated to any category.

923 (11) Grant funds shall be used prospectively; however, grant  
924 funds may be used to reimburse expenses incurred before the  
925 enactment of this program if the costs are adequately documented  
926 and comply with applicable ARPA guidelines. An applicant must  
927 agree to obtain all necessary state and federal permits and follow  
928 all state bidding and contracting laws and fiscally sound  
929 practices in the administration of the funds.

930 (12) (a) Monies must be disbursed under this section in  
931 compliance with the guidelines, guidance, rules, regulations or  
932 other criteria, as may be amended from time to time, of the United  
933 States Department of the Treasury regarding the use of monies from



934 the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund, established by the  
935 American Rescue Plan of 2021.

936 (b) The use of funds allocated under this program shall  
937 be subject to audit by the United States Department of the  
938 Treasury's Office of Inspector General and the Mississippi Office  
939 of the State Auditor. Each person receiving funds under these  
940 programs found to be fully or partially noncompliant with the  
941 requirements in this section shall return to the state all or a  
942 portion of the funds received.

943 (13) The department shall submit to the Lieutenant Governor,  
944 Speaker of the House, House and Senate Appropriations Chairmen,  
945 and the Legislative Budget Office quarterly reports and annual  
946 reports that are due by the dates established in the Compliance  
947 and Reporting Guidance by the United States Department of  
948 Treasury. The reports shall contain the applications received,  
949 the score of the applications, the amount of grant funds awarded  
950 to each applicant, the amount of grant funds expended by each  
951 applicant, and status of each applicant's project. The score of  
952 the applications is not required if the award was provided in the  
953 final round of grants and the Legislature provided the total  
954 amount of funds for all eligible grant requests.

955 (14) Grant funds shall be available under this section  
956 through December 31, 2026, or on the date of the fund expenditure  
957 deadline provided by the federal government, whichever occurs  
958 later. Each grant recipient shall certify for any project for



959 which a grant is awarded that if the project is not completed by  
960 December 31, 2026, and the United States Congress does not enact  
961 an extension of the deadline on the availability of ARPA funds,  
962 then the grant recipient will complete the project through other  
963 funds.

964 (15) The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality may  
965 retain an amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the total  
966 funds allocated to the program to defray administrative costs.

967 (16) The department shall be exempt from provisions of the  
968 Public Procurement Review Board for any requirements of personal  
969 or professional service contracts or the pre-approval of the  
970 solicitation for such contracts used in the execution of its  
971 responsibilities under this section. This subsection shall stand  
972 repealed on January 1, 2026.

973 (17) The provisions of this section shall stand repealed on  
974 January 1, 2027.

975 **SECTION 12.** Upon the effective date of this act, the State  
976 Treasurer, in conjunction with the State Fiscal Officer, shall  
977 transfer the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) from the Coronavirus State  
978 Fiscal Recovery Fund (Fund No. 6821113000) to the Coronavirus  
979 State Fiscal Recovery Lost Revenue Fund (Fund No. 3822113000).

980 **SECTION 13.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
981 and after July 1, 2024, and shall stand repealed on June 30, 2024.

