

By: Representatives Bounds, Read, Anderson
(122nd), Clark, Eure, Hale, Jackson (11th),
Paden, Pigott

To: Appropriations B;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1780

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE SUPPORT AND
2 MAINTENANCE OF THE STATE FORESTRY COMMISSION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
3 2025.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
6 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the State General
7 Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the support and maintenance
8 of the State Forestry Commission for the fiscal year beginning
9 July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025.....
10\$ 15,729,963.00.

11 **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be
12 necessary, is appropriated out of any money in the special fund in
13 the State Treasury to the credit of the State Forestry Commission
14 which is comprised of special source funds collected by or
15 otherwise available to the commission, for the support and
16 maintenance of the commission for the fiscal year beginning
17 July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025.....\$ 12,603,954.00.



18 Of the funds specified in this section, Two Hundred Fifty
19 Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) shall be deposited in a fund
20 created in the State Treasury called the "Forest Improvement
21 Revolving Fund." Money in this fund shall be used by the State
22 Forestry Commission to assist in the reforestation and growth
23 improvement of the forests, woodlands, and publicly owned lands of
24 the state, including sixteenth section lands, Camp Shelby,
25 Columbia Training School and colleges and universities.
26 Landowners who contract with the commission for such work shall
27 pay to the commission its actual cost for conducting such work.
28 Money received for this work by the commission shall be paid into
29 the State Treasury, and the State Treasurer shall deposit such
30 money in the "Forest Improvement Revolving Fund."

31 **SECTION 3.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of
32 this act, the following positions are authorized:

33 AUTHORIZED HEADCOUNT:

34 Permanent: 326

35 Time-Limited: 7

36 With the funds herein appropriated, it shall be the agency's
37 responsibility to make certain that funds required for Personal
38 Services for Fiscal Year 2026 do not exceed Fiscal Year 2025 funds
39 appropriated for that purpose unless programs or positions are
40 added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2025 budget by the Mississippi
41 Legislature. The Legislature shall determine the agency's personal
42 services appropriation, which the State Personnel Board shall



43 publish. In accordance with applicable laws, if an agency
44 determines that its personal services amount is insufficient, the
45 agency must contact the State Personnel Board. Any adjustment to
46 the personal services amount must be approved by the State
47 Personnel Director and the State Fiscal Officer after consultation
48 with the Legislative Budget Office. Any adjustment shall be
49 reported to the Legislative Budget Office and the House and Senate
50 Appropriations Chairmen. The agency's personal services
51 appropriation may consist of restricted funds for approved
52 vacancies for Fiscal Year 2025 that may not be utilized for active
53 Fiscal Year 2024 headcount. It shall be the agency's
54 responsibility to ensure that the funds provided for vacancies are
55 used to increase headcount and not for promotions, title changes,
56 in-range salary adjustments, or any other mechanism for increasing
57 salaries for current employees. If the State Personnel Board
58 determines that an agency has used provided vacancy funds for any
59 of the mechanisms previously listed, the State Personnel Board
60 shall not process any additional salary actions for the agency in
61 the current fiscal year, except for new hires determined by the
62 State Personnel Board to be essential for the agency. It is the
63 Legislature's intention that no employee salary falls below the
64 minimum salary established by the Mississippi State Personnel
65 Board.

66 Additionally, the State Personnel Board shall determine and
67 publish the projected annualized payroll costs based on current



68 employees. It shall be the responsibility of the agency head to
69 ensure that actual personnel expenditures for Fiscal Year 2025 do
70 not exceed the data provided by the Legislative Budget Office. If
71 the agency's projected cost for Fiscal Year 2025 exceeds the
72 annualized costs, no salary actions shall be processed by the
73 State Personnel Board except for new hires determined to be
74 essential for the agency.

75 Any transfers or escalations shall be made in accordance with
76 the terms, conditions, and procedures established by law or
77 allowable under the terms set forth within this act. The State
78 Personnel Board shall not escalate positions without written
79 approval from the Department of Finance and Administration. The
80 Department of Finance and Administration shall not provide written
81 approval to escalate any funds for salaries and/or positions
82 without proof of availability of new or additional funds above the
83 appropriated level.

84 No general funds authorized to be expended herein shall be
85 used to replace federal funds and/or other special funds used for
86 salaries authorized under the provisions of this act and which are
87 withdrawn and no longer available.

88 None of the funds herein appropriated shall be used in
89 violation of the Internal Revenue Service's Publication 15-A
90 relating to the reporting of income paid to contract employees, as
91 interpreted by the Office of the State Auditor.



92 **SECTION 4.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
93 State Forestry Commission shall maintain complete accounting and
94 personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds
95 appropriated under this act and that such records shall be in the
96 same format and level of detail as maintained for Fiscal Year
97 2024. It is further the intention of the Legislature that the
98 agency's budget request for Fiscal Year 2026 shall be submitted to
99 the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of
100 detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided
101 during the Fiscal Year 2025 budget request process.

102 **SECTION 5.** In compliance with the "Mississippi Performance
103 Budget and Strategic Planning Act of 1994," it is the intent of
104 the Legislature that the funds provided herein shall be utilized
105 in the most efficient and effective manner possible to achieve the
106 intended mission of this agency. Based on the funding authorized,
107 this agency shall make every effort to attain the targeted
108 performance measures provided below:

| | FY2025 |
|--|---------------|
| <u>Performance Measures</u> | <u>Target</u> |
| Forest Protection & Information | |
| Average Suppression Time (Hrs from | |
| Detection to Control) | 2.00 |
| Number of Acres Burned Under a | |
| Prescribed Burn Program | 15,000 |
| Percent of Fires Suppressed at 100 Acres | |



| | | |
|-----|--|------------|
| 117 | or Less | 95.00 |
| 118 | Forest Management | |
| 119 | Forest Resource Development Program | |
| 120 | Acres Regenerated or Improved | 35,000 |
| 121 | Acres Monitored for Insect, Storm or Disease | 19,800,000 |
| 122 | Re-Inventory 20% of State's Forest Lands | |
| 123 | (% of Regions) | 20.00 |
| 124 | Percent Increase of Re-Inventory of | |
| 125 | State Forest Land | 20.00 |

126 A reporting of the degree to which the performance targets
127 set above have been or are being achieved shall be provided in the
128 agency's budget request submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget
129 Committee for Fiscal Year 2026.

130 **SECTION 6.** There is created in the State Treasury a fund
131 designated as the Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion
132 Revolving Fund to be used by the State Forestry Commission to
133 assist in the conversion of vehicles acquired by the State
134 Forestry Commission through the Federal Excess Personal Property
135 Program or by volunteer fire departments through other means to
136 adapt them for use in the suppression of wildland fires. This
137 assistance shall be in the form of fabrication of water tanks or
138 other accessories necessary for the operation of fire suppression
139 units, installation of piping and valves, painting or other
140 similar or associated component work necessary to place fire



141 suppression equipment into service. It is not for general vehicle
142 maintenance or repair.

143 The Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion Revolving
144 Fund shall be funded by monies received from charges for work and
145 services performed for volunteer fire departments by the State
146 Forestry Commission. Monies collected from such charges shall be
147 deposited into the Volunteer Fire Department Equipment Conversion
148 Revolving Fund. The State Treasurer shall make disbursements
149 therefrom for payment of materials, supplies and labor upon
150 requisition of the Forestry Commission and upon the issuance of
151 warrants therefor by the Department of Finance and Administration.

152 The amount of monies deposited into the Volunteer Fire
153 Department Equipment Conversion Fund through this work shall not
154 exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00). Funds in excess of
155 Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) shall be placed in the State
156 Forestry Commission's regular appropriated special funds. Monies
157 in this revolving fund are to be considered special funds and
158 shall be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next.

159 **SECTION 7.** There is created in the State Treasury a fund
160 designated as the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund to be used by
161 the State Forestry Commission to direct forest management
162 activities on the Camden State Forest in Madison County,
163 Mississippi. The forest management activities will include, but
164 not be limited to, maintenance of property, timber sale activities
165 and regeneration work.



166 The Camden State Forest Revolving Fund shall be funded by
167 monies received from timber sales, leases, and any other source.
168 Monies collected from these income sources shall be deposited into
169 the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund. The State Treasurer shall
170 make disbursements therefrom for payments of materials, supplies
171 and labor upon requisition of the State Forestry Commission and
172 upon the issuance of warrants therefor by the Department of
173 Finance and Administration.

174 It is the intention of the Legislature that any revolving
175 funds in excess of the budgeted amount needed for the necessary
176 operation and maintenance of all properties under the direct
177 supervision and management of the State Forestry Commission shall
178 remain in the Camden State Forest Revolving Fund for use in future
179 years.

180 **SECTION 8.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 2, it is the
181 intention of the Legislature that Two Hundred Thousand Dollars
182 (\$200,000.00) shall be transferred to the Department of
183 Agriculture and Commerce for the Beaver Control or Eradication
184 Program during the Fiscal Year 2025.

185 **SECTION 9.** Any funds in the Salary, Wages and Fringe
186 Benefits major object of expenditure may be used to purchase
187 accumulated compensatory time within the funds available.

188 **SECTION 10.** It is the intention of the Legislature that
189 whenever two (2) or more bids are received by this agency for the
190 purchase of commodities or equipment, and whenever all things



191 stated in such received bids are equal with respect to price,
192 quality and service, the Mississippi Industries for the Blind
193 shall be given preference. A similar preference shall be given to
194 the Mississippi Industries for the Blind whenever purchases are
195 made without competitive bids.

196 **SECTION 11.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the
197 funds herein appropriated shall be expended in compliance with
198 Section 27-104-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, that no state agency
199 shall incur obligations or indebtedness in excess of their
200 appropriation and that the responsible officers, either personally
201 or upon their official bonds, shall be held responsible for
202 actions contrary to this provision.

203 **SECTION 12.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by
204 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the
205 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon
206 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal
207 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the
208 proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

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

