

By: Senator(s) Blackwell, Jackson, Hickman,
Simmons (13th), Boyd

To: Public Health and
Welfare

SENATE BILL NO. 2888
(As Passed the Senate)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CANNABIS RESEARCH
2 PROGRAM AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR CANNABIS RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
3 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI; TO SET CERTAIN DUTIES AND
4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE UNIVERSITY OF
5 MISSISSIPPI TO PROVIDE STAFF FOR THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN
6 RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED AT THE PROGRAM; TO ESTABLISH THE MEDICAL
7 CANNABIS RESEARCH ADVISORY BOARD, WHICH SHALL BE THE COMMITTEE
8 THAT IS REQUIRED TO ADVISE THE LEGISLATURE ABOUT MEDICAL CANNABIS
9 AND CANNABIS PRODUCTS, PATIENT CARE, SERVICES AND INDUSTRY; TO
10 PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD; TO PROVIDE THE BOARD'S
11 RESPONSIBILITIES; TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD TO RECEIVE PER DIEM
12 SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO
13 REPORT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEES OF THE
14 MISSISSIPPI STATE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON
15 INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL CANNABIS RESEARCH;
16 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

18 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby created the Mississippi
19 Medical Cannabis Research Program at the National Center for
20 Cannabis Research and Education at the University of Mississippi.

21 (2) Subject to funding, the program:

22 (a) Shall seek state, federal and private funds to
23 award grants for medical cannabis research;



24 (b) Shall facilitate and support funding for research
25 related to the health effects, including the potential risks or
26 side effects, of the use of cannabis products;

27 (c) Shall facilitate and support funding for research
28 related to the efficacy and potential health effects of various
29 cannabis delivery methods, including vaporizing, ingesting,
30 topical application, and combustion;

31 (d) Shall support researchers in applying for and
32 securing federal and private research grant funding for expanding
33 medical cannabis research;

34 (e) Shall review current and future cannabis research
35 literature, clinical studies, and clinical trials;

36 (f) Shall educate medical providers, lawmakers, and the
37 public about medical cannabis research advances;

38 (g) Shall, if requested, consult with researchers and
39 eligible institutions seeking to conduct medical cannabis research
40 regarding legal implications of the research under state and
41 federal law;

42 (h) Shall monitor, to the extent that is appropriate
43 and when sufficient data is available, patient outcomes in any
44 state with a medicinal cannabis program;

45 (i) May coordinate, share knowledge, and share best
46 practices with a state:

47 (i) That has a medical cannabis program; and

48 (ii) Is conducting cannabis research;



49 (j) May award or facilitate funding for grants to an
50 eligible institution for medical cannabis research, including
51 research regarding the growing of a medical-grade cannabis plant
52 that is used for a cannabis product;

53 (k) May support a licensed cannabis cultivation
54 facility to provide medical-grade cannabis products for research;

55 (l) Shall make, for research conducted by the program,
56 the research outcomes publicly available;

57 (m) Shall maintain a catalog of all published
58 scientific reports based on projects funded or managed by the
59 program;

60 (n) Shall ensure that an individual who agrees to use a
61 cannabis product as part of a research project conducted by the
62 program or a grantee:

63 (i) Is a registered, qualifying patient
64 cardholder; or

65 (ii) If included in the research project as a
66 resident of another state, has the equivalent of such
67 certification under the laws of another state, district,
68 territory, commonwealth or insular possession of the United
69 States;

70 (o) Shall provide information to the Department of
71 Health describing:



72 (i) All research projects that are funded by a
73 grant awarded by the program, including which institution received
74 the grant;

75 (ii) All research projects conducted by the
76 program; and

77 (iii) The adequacy of funding for the program's
78 duties.

79 (3) For research funded, conducted, or facilitated by the
80 program, the program shall ensure the research:

81 (a) Includes appropriate research development, testing,
82 and evaluation; and

83 (b) If the research involves human subjects, is
84 reviewed, approved, and overseen by an institutional review board.

85 (4) The University of Mississippi shall provide staff for
86 the program.

87 **SECTION 2.** (1) There is established the Medical Cannabis
88 Research Advisory Board, which shall be the board that is required
89 to advise and review research about medical cannabis and
90 cannabinoid research activities, status of research plans and
91 research budget, and research findings of the Mississippi Medical
92 Cannabis Research Program at the National Center for Cannabis
93 Research and Education at the University of Mississippi.

94 (2) The advisory board shall consist of eleven (11) members,
95 as follows:



96 (a) The Governor shall appoint four (4) members to the
97 committee, as follows:

98 (i) Two (2) Medical Cannabis Researchers from the
99 University of Mississippi's NCCRE;

100 (ii) One (1) registered qualifying patient
101 enrolled in medical cannabis research in Mississippi; and

102 (iii) One (1) physician who is a Mississippi
103 registered cannabis practitioner with over one hundred (100)
104 cannabis patients.

105 (b) The Lieutenant Governor shall appoint four (4)
106 members, as follows:

107 (i) One (1) medical cannabis research scientist;

108 (ii) One (1) representative from the MDOH who is
109 involved in the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Program;

110 (iii) One (1) advanced practice registered nurse
111 who is a Mississippi registered cannabis practitioner with over
112 one hundred (100) patients; and

113 (iv) One (1) medical cannabis research
114 technologist.

115 (c) The Speaker of the House shall appoint three (3)
116 members, as follows:

117 (i) One (1) physician experienced as a principal
118 investigator in cannabinoid research and/or clinical trials;

119 (ii) One (1) epidemiologist; and

120 (iii) One (1) patient care advocate.



121 (3) The advisory board shall meet at least every three (3)
122 months or as often as necessary for the purpose of evaluating and
123 making recommendations to the Legislature and the MDOH and MDOR
124 regarding:

125 (a) Developing evidence-based guidance for treatment
126 with medical cannabis based on the latest medical research that
127 shall include:

128 (i) For each qualifying condition, a summary of
129 the latest medical research regarding the treatment of the
130 qualifying condition with medical cannabis;

131 (ii) Risks, contraindications, side effects, and
132 adverse reactions that are associated with medical cannabis use;
133 and

134 (iii) Potential drug interactions between medical
135 cannabis and medications that have been approved by the United
136 States Food and Drug Administration; and

137 (b) Educate recommending medical providers, pharmacy
138 medical providers, medical cannabis cardholders, and the public
139 regarding:

140 (i) The evidence-based guidance for treatment with
141 medical cannabis;

142 (ii) Relevant warnings and safety information
143 related to medical cannabis use; and

144 (iii) Other topics related to medical cannabis use
145 as determined by the department.



146 (4) The Chairman of the Medical Cannabis Research Advisory
147 Board shall be elected by the voting members of the board annually
148 and shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive years as
149 chairman.

150 (5) The members of the Medical Cannabis Research Advisory
151 Board specified in subsection (2) of this section shall serve for
152 terms that are concurrent with the terms of members of the
153 Legislature, and any member appointed under subsection (2) of this
154 section may be reappointed to the advisory board. The members of
155 the advisory board specified in subsection (2) of this section
156 shall serve without compensation but shall receive reimbursement
157 to defray actual expenses incurred in the performance of board
158 business as authorized by law.

159 The board shall:

160 (a) Nominate a board member to serve as chairperson of
161 the board by a majority vote of the board members; and

162 (b) Meet as often as necessary to accomplish the duties
163 assigned to the board under this act.

164 (6) Each board member, including the chair, has one (1)
165 vote.

166 (7) (a) A majority of board members constitutes a quorum.

167 (b) A vote of a majority of the quorum at any board
168 meeting is necessary to take action on behalf of the board.

169 (8) Subject to appropriation, a board member:



170 (a) Shall receive a per diem in the amount provided in
171 Section 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the board;
172 and

173 (b) Shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses
174 incurred while engaged in official business of the board in
175 accordance with Section 25-3-41.

176 (9) The MDOH and MDOR shall act swiftly to assist the
177 Advisory Board with any request.

178 **SECTION 3.** (1) By the November interim meeting each year
179 beginning in 2024, the department shall report to the Public
180 Health and Welfare Committees of the Mississippi State Senate and
181 the House of Representatives on information provided by the
182 Medical Cannabis Research Program described in this act.

183 (2) The department shall not include personally identifying
184 information in the report described in this section.

185 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
186 and after July 1, 2024.

