

LEGISLATIVE WATCH

2024, Volume 1, Issue 2

House Bill (HB) 1725

On Wednesday, February 28, 2024, Medicaid expansion passed the House 98-20 and now advances to the Senate. **For more than a decade, Mississippians have been urging our state officials to expand Medicaid health coverage to thousands of people and to prevent hospitals closures in the state, especially rural hospitals.**

Notwithstanding, the Governor and other legislative leaders refused to expand Medicaid calling it Obama Care. HB 1725 authored by newly appointed House Speaker Jason White, Republican-West, and House Medicaid Chair, Missy McGee, Republican-Hattiesburg would expand Medicaid eligibility to 138% of the federal poverty level or approximately \$20,000.00 for an individual annually.

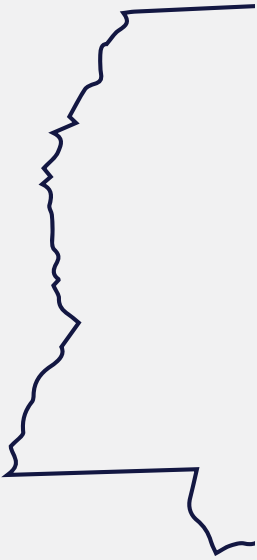
The bill contains a work requirement, but states that the expansion would go into effect even if the federal government does not approve the work requirement. It also has a built in repealer where the program would automatically end after four years unless the state Legislature decides to renew it. HB 1725 passed with more than two-thirds of the majority vote needed to override a potential veto from Governor Tate Reeves. The expansion bill will provide healthcare coverage for approximately 200,000 working poor Mississippians. It is noteworthy that all the Democrats in the House voted for the bill and everyone who voted against the bill was a Republican. The bill now advances to the Senate which is working on its own version of a Medicaid expansion bill. *To read the full bill click here [HB1725PS.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#).*



A GOOD DAY TO BE IN
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

STAY WOKE BLACK MISSISSIPPIANS

Senate Bill (SB) 2726



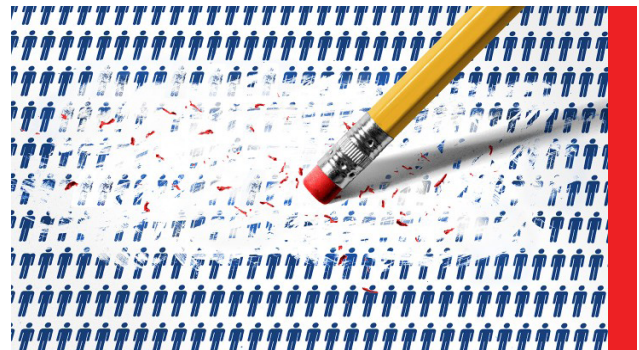
Senate Bill 2726 authored by Republican Senator John Polk of Hattiesburg and owner of Polk's Meat Products states that the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning shall choose three of the state institutions of higher learning to close by June 30, 2028. The bill is currently in the Mississippi State Senate Universities and Colleges Committee where it needs a majority vote to be submitted to the full body for a vote. *To see members of the Senate Education Committee please click here [Senate Committees | MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE \(ms.gov\)](#)*. This bill is similar to legislation introduced in the early nineties and in 2009 to close and/or merge Mississippi's three Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Jackson State University, Alcorn State University and Mississippi Valley State University. The three HBCUs have long struggled because of racism and discrimination. The United States Supreme Court ruled in *Jake Ayers vs State College Board/Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)* 2002 that the state had willfully withheld funds and engaged in discriminatory funding practices against the state's three HBCUs, even after they had met the benchmark to receive their funding. *To read the full bill click here [SB2726IN.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#)*. This bill died in committee on 3/5/24.

VOTER PURGING IN MISSISSIPPI

House Bill (HB) 1310

HB 1310 is a voting purge law that passed during the 2023 legislative session that gives the Secretary of State Office the power to add you to an "inactive" list if you have not voted in two federal elections. It further purges you from voter rolls if you do not respond to a notice mailed to your home within four years. Therefore, we are urging everyone to check your voter registration status and your precinct location to make sure it has not moved since you last voted. *To read the full bill click here [HB1310SG.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#)*.

Doug Chayka



Also, make sure you have a photo identification. Mississippi requires photo identification to vote. If you do not have a photo identification, you can obtain one for free from your local circuit clerk's office.

BE PREPARED!

BE VOTER READY!

For the March 12, 2024, Presidential (Federal) Primary Election.

MAEP FUNDING FORMULA UNDER ATTACK

House Bill (HB) 1453

This 400+ pages bill will allow the Legislature to decide how much funding schools need. **HB 1453 proposes a new funding structure that would leave it to legislators to determine the yearly base student cost as opposed to the current objective formula for base student cost which is supposed to reflect the actual cost of educating a student to proficiency in core subjects.** The base student cost multiplied by enrollment equals the amount of money that school districts are supposed to receive. The Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) has only been fully funded twice since its inception, 2003 and 2007. We need our schools fully funded, not our formula rewritten. Our parents, students, families, stakeholders, and educators in the public schools deserve fully funded schools. *To read the full bill click here [HB1453CS.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#). To see members of the House Education Committee click here [House Committees | MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE \(ms.gov\)](#).* This bill passed the House 94-13 on 3/6/24 and now advances to the Senate.



Southern Echo is a nonprofit as such we do not engage in partisan politics. We seek to educate our communities, and keep them updated on legislation that impacts the community.

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