

LEGISLATIVE WATCH

2024, Volume 1, Issue 3

EARLY VOTING COULD FINALLY HAPPEN IN MISSISSIPPI

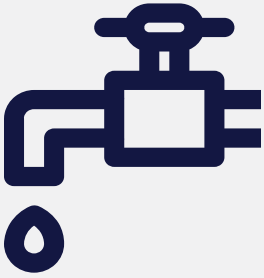
Senate Bill (SB) 2580

SB 2580 “In-Person Early Voting Act”, authored by Senate Elections Chairman, Jeremy England, Republican-Vancleave, passed a Senate Committee on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, **that would allow voters in Mississippi for the first time to cast their ballots in person 15 days prior to an election and continue until noon on the Saturday immediately preceding the election.** Mississippi voters using the new system would have to cast their ballots in person at their circuit clerk’s office and provide a valid voter identification. *To read the entire bill click here* [SB2580IN.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#). Mississippi, Alabama and New Hampshire are the only states that do not allow early in-person voting. This bill passed in the Senate 3/12/2024, and now advances to the House.



STAY WOKE BLACK JACKSONIANS

Senate Bill 2628



On Tuesday, March 12, 2024, the Senate passed Senate Bill 2628, 35-14, and now it advances to the House. The bill called the Mississippi Capitol Region Utility Act if passed would remove the city of Jackson's control of its water and sewer systems. Currently, the city's water and sewer system is being managed by Ted Henifin who was federally appointed by U.S. District Court Judge Henry Wingate until 2027. Senate Bill 2628 authored by Senator David Parker, Republican-Olive Branch, if passed would force Jackson to sell its water and sewer infrastructure to a new utility authority, which would operate as a corporate nonprofit. *To read the full bill click here [SB2628_S_Amend_01.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#)*. The new authority will be governed by a nine-member board, who would select a president to run the day-to-day operations.

The nine-member board will be appointed as follows:

- The mayor of Jackson would appoint one member, who would be a member of the clergy leading a place of worship in the city.
- The Jackson City Council would appoint two members, an employee of a local nonprofit in the city, and an owner of a restaurant in the city.
- The governor would appoint three members, an employee of a large nonhealthcare business in the city, a small business owner whose main location is in the city, and an at-large appointee who lives or works in the city.
- The lieutenant governor would appoint three members, an employee of a large health care facility in the city, an employee of a post-secondary institution in the city, and an at-large appointee who lives or works in the city.

The bill would require the board to hold monthly meetings. This bill passed in the Senate 3/12/2024, and now advances to the House.

MISSISSIPPI ADEQUATE EDUCATION PROGRAM (MAEP)

Senate Bill (SB) 2332

This bill passed the Senate with only minor adjustments to MAEP to increase funding for low wealth school districts. **It increases the maximum amount in local contributions that wealthier school districts must provide from 27% to 29.5% of the base cost.** The bill also holds harmless for one year school districts that would lose funding due to a drop in average daily attendance as well as it specifies that 90% of MAEP funds must be spent on teacher salaries, classroom resources, and expenditures other than superintendents and principals' salaries. The legislation also requires that a pro-rated share of a charter student's MAEP allocation be returned to the traditional public school if the student returns to the traditional public school. *To read the full bill click here [SB2332PS.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#)*. This bill is now in the Education Appropriation Committee.



SCHOOL DISTRICTS TRANSFERS

House Bill 867

HB 867, if passed would allow students to attend schools in districts where they do not live and do not pay property taxes if the receiving school district approves. This bill would further place an administrative burden on school districts by requiring them to report publicly the capacity in each grade of each school that is available for out of district transfer students. *To read the full bill click here [HB0867CS.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#).* This bill passed the House on 3/13/2024, and now advances to the Senate.

MISSISSIPPI MAKES MOVES TO PAY PRIVATE SCHOOL TUITION WITH PUBLIC DOLLARS

House Bill 1449

This bill establishes a study committee made up of a majority of members appointed by vouchers supporters to determine the feasibility of universal vouchers for private school tuition, a measure that would provide publicly subsidized tuition for all current and new private school students statewide. *To read the full bill click here [HB1449CS.pdf \(state.ms.us\)](#).* This bill passed the House Appropriations Committee on March 5, 2024. This bill died on the calendar 3/14/2024.



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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