

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MARCH 6, 2026

The Mississippi Legislature adjourned the ninth week of session and will reconvene Monday at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday marked a key deadline for general bills originating in the opposite chamber to be reported from committee, significantly narrowing the number of measures still alive this session. Tensions between the House and Senate have become more pronounced, with limited communication between the chambers impacting the advancement of legislation. As a result, some bills appear to be stalling due to inter-chamber dynamics rather than policy differences, adding uncertainty as the session moves forward.

As lawmakers continue working on appropriations bills to set the FY 2027 budget, the State's revenue declined in February, with collections coming in \$65.3 million (13.25%) below the legislative estimate. However, according to the Legislative Budget Office (LBO), year-to-date collections remain above estimate with four months left in the fiscal year. The State's full-year revenue estimate is \$7.552 billion. In February, General Fund collections were \$55.7 million (11.53%) below collections for the same month in the prior fiscal year. Sales tax collections decreased by \$8.6 million and corporate income tax collections were down \$6 million compared to last year, while individual income tax collections increased by \$12.6 million year-over-year.

After both the House and Senate Education Committees killed the teacher pay raise bill at Tuesday's deadline, the House revived the issue this morning by adopting a strike-all amendment to [SB 2103](#) on the floor. The amendment provides a \$5,000 across-the-board raise for teachers, with an additional \$3,000 increase for special education teachers, and a \$3,000 raise for assistant teachers. It also includes a \$5,000 pay increase for school attendance officers, places a cap on superintendent salaries, and brings forward the student funding formula. The measure revises PERS provisions by restoring a 25-year retirement option for first responders and reducing the requirement to 30 years for state employees, while allowing teachers to return to work and receive full PERS benefits. Additional provisions direct support to D- and F-rated districts to help address teacher shortages. The move comes after the Senate's version, [SB 2001](#), which would have provided a \$2,000 raise for teachers, assistant teachers, and higher education instructors, died in committee. The debate unfolds as Mississippi's average teacher salary remains around \$53,000, well below the national average of approximately \$70,000. Only a handful of education bills remain alive following Tuesday's deadline amid rising tensions at the Capitol.

Tuesday's committee deadline proved consequential beyond education policy. The House State Affairs Committee surprised many when it did not meet in the days leading up to the committee deadline, effectively killing many of the Senate bills assigned to the committee.

Among the casualties was SB 2016, legislation that would have elevated Visit Mississippi to a cabinet-level agency reporting directly to the Governor. The proposal was intended to better align the state's fourth largest industry, which generates \$18.1 billion in total economic impact, supports more than 136,000 jobs and delivers more than \$1.1 billion annually to the state's general fund.

The Senate Accountability, Efficiency, and Transparency (AET) committee also killed several pro-business bills that have been studied and worked on for the past several years. HB 1220 would have established a cybersecurity liability safe harbor for state and local government entities, as well as certain businesses, that adopt recognized cybersecurity standards. The legislation would have provided a rebuttable presumption against liability for cybersecurity incidents if an entity maintained a program ensuring data confidentiality and integrity. In addition, HB 329, which would make reverse auctions optional, not mandatory, making the state's procurement process more efficient and less costly, died in committee.

BILLS STILL ADVANCING:

HB 1665, or the Pharmacy Benefit Manager Bill, made it out of the Senate Public Health Committee on Tuesday's deadline by a narrow vote of 8-6. It was a strike-all amended by Senator Rita Parks (R-Corinth), who has been a leading supporter of independent pharmacies. Senator Jeremy England (R-Ocean Springs), viewed as a voice for business and industry on this issue, led a lengthy question and answer session with Sen. Parks and touted many of the business community talking points against the legislation. The business community continues to raise concerns about the Senate amendments ahead of the floor deadline for this bill of March 11th.

Both chambers advanced legislation aimed at directing the state's opioid settlement funds toward combating overdose deaths, which have claimed the lives of more than 10,000 Mississippians since 2000. Following criticism over delays in addressing the issue and the limited expenditure of funds to date, the bills build on the work of the Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Council. The legislation establishes clear guidelines for allocating the funds and ensures that settlement dollars are dedicated to addiction treatment, abatement efforts, and overdose prevention.

One of the most talked about measures to pass the Mississippi House this session is HB 4014, which would exempt college athletes from paying state income tax on earnings from Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) deals. Supporters say the proposal is designed to make Mississippi universities more competitive in recruiting and retaining top talent by allowing student-athletes to keep more of their NIL compensation. Opponents object saying that the income tax elimination is not fully phased in for all Mississippians yet and it is not fair that all other citizens would still pay income tax.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

- Tuesday, March 10 – Chairman's deadline for local and private legislation to be requested
- Wednesday, March 11 – Deadline for original floor action on general bills originating in the other chamber
- Tuesday, March 17 – Deadline for original floor action on appropriations and revenue bills originating in the other chamber