STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1542

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(b)(17), I issued a Proclamation declaring that a State of Emergency exists in the State of Mississippi as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 beginning on January 27, 2020, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic, and on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a nationwide state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 and the effects of its extreme risk of person-to-person transmission throughout the United States and Mississippi significantly impacts the life and health of our people, as well as the economy of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, with vigilance and common sense, and as a result of the continued sacrifices made by all Mississippians in the interest of public health over the past nine months, COVID-19 infections and resulting hospitalizations have been effectively managed; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Recovery Order instituted in Executive Order 1535 adopts reasonable public health measures under the current circumstances permitting all business and non-profits to continue operating within the State of Mississippi and permitting the continued resumption of all community activities subject to reasonable limitations to minimize person to person interactions and associated risk of transmission of COVID-19 is set to expire at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi must protect lives while restoring livelihoods, both of which can be achieved with the expert advice of medical professionals and business leaders; and

WHEREAS, as Mississippi continues to safely recover, the key to reducing spread of COVID-19 is the continued implementation of reasonable public health measures under the current circumstances including social distancing, limited capacity of gatherings where individuals are in prolonged close proximity, and use of face coverings for individuals engaged in close proximity activities and for prolonged gatherings where social distancing is not feasible; and

WHEREAS, while some jurisdictions throughout Mississippi have shown a relatively stabilized rate of diagnosis of new cases, the State Health Officer has reported that data from certain jurisdictions of the state (a) indicate periods of higher numbers of new cases over shorter periods of time accounting for a larger percentage of the State's overall case count, (b) have higher percent incidence of positive cases per number of tests performed, and (c) have other public health indicators reflecting ongoing community transmission; and

WHEREAS, testing and contact tracing throughout the state allows healthcare providers and the State Health Officer to monitor and gauge the rate and locations of new COVID-19 cases, enabling a prompt response to areas showing an increased rate of transmission; and

WHEREAS, on December 9, 2020, upon counsel and recommendation of the State Health Officer, I issued Executive Order 1536 establishing additional jurisdiction-specific measures in Adams, Alcorn, Amite, Attala, Bolivar, Calhoun, Carroll, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Clarke, Clay, Coahoma, Copiah, Covington, De Soto, Forrest, Franklin, Grenada, Harrison, Hinds, Holmes, Itawamba, Jackson, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Jones, Kemper, Lafayette, Lamar, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Lee, Leflore, Lincoln, Lowndes, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Monroe, Montgomery, Neshoba, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Panola, Pearl River, Perry, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Stone, Tate, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union, Washington, Webster, Winston, Yalobusha and Yazoo Counties to further disrupt the spread of the COVID-19 virus within those Counties; and

WHEREAS, on December 22, 2020, upon counsel and recommendation of the State Health Officer, I issued Executive Order 1539 establishing additional jurisdiction-specific measures in Benton, George, Greene, Hancock, Humphreys, Jasper, Leake, Newton, Pike, Quitman, Smith, Sunflower, Tallahatchie,

Walthall, Warren, Wayne and Wilkinson Counties to further disrupt the spread of the COVID-19 virus within those Counties; and

WHEREAS, upon counsel and recommendation of the State Health Officer, Claiborne and Tunica Counties have been identified as additional regions of the State that currently are at a higher risk for transmission of COVID-19; accordingly, additional jurisdiction-specific measures are necessary in these Counties to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 to address and further limit person to person contact and implement other health and safety measures; and

WHEREAS, upon counsel and recommendation of the State Health Officer, Adams, Jefferson, Lawrence, Quitman and Wilkinson Counties have shown a stabilized rate of diagnosis of new COVID-19 cases, and the additional jurisdiction-specific measures in these counties instituted by Executive Orders 1536 and 1539 are no longer necessary; and

WHEREAS, upon counsel and recommendation of the State Health Officer, in order to continue to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 and minimize person to person interactions and associated risk, it is necessary to extend the Safe Recovery Order.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, Governor of the State of Mississippi, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution, the Mississippi Emergency Management Law as amended, Miss. Code. Ann.§ 33-15-1 *et seq.*, and other laws of the State of Mississippi, and in consultation with the State Health Officer do hereby order and direct as follows:

I. The statewide Safe Recovery Order instituted in Executive Order 1535 is extended and shall remain in full force and effect until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded.

II. Paragraph II of Executive Order 1536, as amended by Paragraph I of Executive Order 1539 is further amended to add Claiborne and Tunica Counties.

III. Paragraph II of Executive Order 1536, as amended by Paragraph I of Executive Order 1539 is further amended to delete Adams, Jefferson, Lawrence, Quitman and Wilkinson Counties.

IV. These amendments to Paragraph II of Executive Order 1536 shall be effective at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, January 15, 2021.

V. Executive Order 1536, as amended by Paragraph I of Executive Order 1539 and herein is extended and shall remain in full force and effect until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, unless it is modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, on the 15th day of January, in the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-fifth.

TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR

MICHAEL WATSON
SECRETARY OF STATE