STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the State Health Officer has reported that there is a high risk for an outbreak of the novel coronavirus, identified as COVID-19, in the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the Mississippi State Department of Health confirmed the first presumptive case of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Mississippi and the Mississippi State Department of Health has since that time worked to identify, contact, and test others in Mississippi potentially exposed to COVID-19 in coordination with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

WHEREAS, COVID-19, a respiratory disease that can result in serious illness or death, is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person; and

WHEREAS, the CDC identifies the potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 both globally and in the United States as "very high", and has advised that person-to-person spread of COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States; 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 CDC currently indicates there are approximately 106,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide with 1,323 of those cases in the United States, and the Mississippi State Department of Health has now confirmed localized person-to-person spread of COVID-19 in Mississippi, significantly increasing the risk of exposure and infection to Mississippi's general public and creating an extreme public health risk that may spread quickly; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, I signed Executive Order No. 1457 to create the Mississippi Coronavirus (COVID-19) Preparedness and Response Planning Steering Committee chaired by the Mississippi State Health Officer in order to coordinate and assist with efforts related to implementation and review of Mississippi's pandemic preparedness and response to hazards related to the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi State Department of Health has instituted a Public Health Incident Management Team to manage the public health aspects of this outbreak; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, State Emergency Operations Center, is coordinating resources across state government to support the Mississippi State Department of Health and local officials in alleviating the impact to people, property, and infrastructure and is assessing the magnitude and long-term effects of the incident with the Mississippi State Department of Health; 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 impact the life and health of our people, as well as the economy of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the risk of spread of COVID-19 within Mississippi constitutes a public emergency that may result in substantial injury or harm to life, health, and property within Mississippi.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, Governor of the State of Mississippi, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(b)(17), do hereby declare that a State of Emergency exists in the State of Mississippi, and direct that the

Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan be implemented. Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann § 33-15-11(c), state agencies and departments are directed to utilize state resources and to do everything reasonably possible to assist communities and entities affected by the outbreak.

As a result of this event, I also hereby direct the Mississippi State Department of Health, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, and other agencies, boards, and commissions, to identify and provide appropriate personnel for conducting necessary and ongoing incident related assessments.

FURTHER, I direct the following:

Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(c)(1) the provisions of state statutes, rules, regulations or orders may be temporarily suspended or modified if compliance with such provisions would prevent, hinder, or delay action necessary to cope with this outbreak.

Health care facilities that have invoked their emergency operation plans in response to this outbreak may implement the "alternative standards of care" plans provided therein, and such are declared to be the state approved standard of care in health care facilities to be executed by health care professionals and allied professions and occupations providing services in response to this outbreak.

All health care professionals and assisting personnel executing in good faith under the "alternative standards of care" are hereby declared to be "Emergency Management Workers" of the State of Mississippi for the purposes of Miss. Code Ann. Title 41.

The State Health Officer shall inform members of the public on how to protect themselves and actions being taken in response to this outbreak.

The Mississippi State Department of Health and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency seek federal assistance as may be available.

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 14th day of March, in the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-fourth.

Tate Reeves

TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR

Michael Watson

MICHAEL D. WATSON, JR.
SECRETARY OF STATE