STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1504

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-1 l(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 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 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; and

WHEREAS, limiting social interaction between members of the public who may be in a position to transmit COVID-19 to other individuals, including vulnerable populations of older adults and individuals with serious chronic medical conditions is necessary to slow the transmission of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, due to the State of Emergency as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19, I issued Executive Order 1458 providing to state agencies, boards, commissions and other state entities authority to grant certain employees administrative leave with pay to prevent the risk of possible transmission of COVID-19 within the workplace; and

WHEREAS, various government entities, including the Mississippi Public Service Commission ("PSC"), in compliance with my Executive Orders, temporarily reduced its operations; and

WHEREAS, Miss. Code Ann. § 77-2-7(1) requires the PSC to submit to the Governor a list of three to six qualified candidates for the position of executive director of the public utilities staff, on or before May 15, 2020; and Miss. Code Ann. § 77-2-7(1) also affords to the Governor forty-five (45) days, until July 1, 2020 to appoint an executive director of the public utilities staff; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the temporary COVID-19 related reduction in operations, the PSC was unable to meet its May 15, 2020 deadline under Miss. Code Ann. § 77-2-7(1) to submit to the Governor a list of three to six qualified candidates for the position of executive director and accordingly requested an extension of time; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the PSC in order to cope with and respond to the COVID-19 emergency on April 20, 2020, I issued Executive Order No. 1475 extending the May 15, 2020 deadline until June 1, 2020 for the PSC to submit a list of three to six qualified candidates for the position of executive director of the public utilities staff; and

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1484 directing all state agencies, boards, commissions, counties, municipalities, public school districts and other state and local entities to begin the process of returning all employees back to work; and

WHEREAS, by letter dated May 29, 2020, the PSC submitted to the Governor the name of three candidates for the position of executive director of the public utilities staff; and

WHEREAS, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, in order to afford to the Governor the full forty-five days to evaluate and make the appointment of the executive director of the

public utilities staff, the fifteen-day extension of the deadline for the PSC to submit to the Governor a list of candidates likewise requires an extension of the Governor's deadline under Miss. Code Ann. § 77-2-7(1) to appoint an executive director of the public utilities staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, Governor of the State of Mississippi, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Mississippi, do hereby order and direct as follows:

As a result of the issuance of Executive Order No. 1475, pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(c)(1), to cope with and respond to the COVID-19 emergency, the provision of Miss. Code Ann. § 77-2-7(1) requiring the Governor to appoint the executive director of the public utility staff on or before July 1, 2020 is hereby suspended, to extend the time for the Governor to appoint an executive director of the public utilities staff through and including July 15, 2020.

IN TESTIMONY 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 30th day of June, 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
GOVERNOR

BY THE GOVERNOR

MICHAEL WATSON
SECRETARY OF STATE