STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 1499

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, on March 26, 2020, the Mississippi State Department of Health announced new and expanded measures to increase testing and data analysis to identify regions and localities that are at higher risk for transmission of COVID-19 and to provide more location-specific restrictions and limitation of movement and social interaction to combat the virus in those regions and localities; and

WHEREAS, on April 1, 2020, in order to minimize the risk of possible further transmission of COVID-19 and related measures, I issued Executive Order No. 1466 instituting a statewide Shelter in Place that remained in effect from April 3, 2020 through April 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the guidance provided by the White House for beginning the process of reopening the economy while minimizing the risk of a resurgence of COVID-19, as of April 24, 2020, the incidences of infection in Mississippi had stabilized; there was decreased utilization of hospital resources; a robust testing system was in place capable of promptly detecting any increase in the rate of infection; the healthcare system was capable of treating persons with the COVID-19 and had the capacity to promptly react to any increase in incidences; and the State had in place a plan to rapidly scale up healthcare capacity in the event of an increase in the rate of infection, accordingly, I issued Executive Order 1477 establishing the statewide Safer at Home order allowing certain businesses to open and operate under certain conditions that remained in effect from May 11, 2020 through June 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on May 28, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1492 establishing the statewide Safe Return order to restart the economy, open all businesses and non-profits operating within the State of Mississippi, and permit the resumption of community activities subject to limitations to minimize person to person interactions and associated risk of transmission of COVID-19 effective June 1, 2020; and on June 10, 2020, I issued Executive Order 1496 extending the statewide Safe Return until 8:00 a.m. Monday, June 29, 2020, unless further extended; and

WHEREAS, during the State of Emergency my singular focus has been on protecting the lives and livelihoods of Mississippians; and

WHEREAS, during the State of Emergency although business and government operations, community activities, and travel are resuming, it is anticipated that they will continue to be subject to certain limitations to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the State of Emergency, including the limitations on business operations and travel, it has not been possible to thoroughly and appropriately evaluate all potential candidates for appointment to serve on state and regulatory agencies, boards and commissions; and

WHEREAS, for the duration of the State of Emergency it is necessary to maintain a continuity of operations of state and regulatory agencies, boards and commissions to ensure the consistent application of rules, regulations, policies and procedures, including those adopted to minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and return Mississippians to work.

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:

I. Due to the COVID-19 emergency and resulting need to maintain a continuity of operations of state and regulatory agencies, boards and commissions, pursuant to the Mississippi Management Act, including Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(b)(1), (c)(1) and (c)(4), all interim or hold-over appointees currently serving as directors, commissioners or members of state or regulatory agencies, boards or commissions appointed pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 69-15-2 (Mississippi Board of Animal Health); 57-10-167 (Mississippi Business Finance Corporation); 37-28-7 (Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board); 19-5-333 (Commercial Mobile Radio Service Board); 37-63-3 (Mississippi Public Broadcasting Board); 49-2-5 (Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality); 73-36-9 (State Board of Registration for Foresters of the State of Mississippi); 49-19-1 (State Forestry Commission); 75-76-9 (Mississippi Gaming Commission); 25-53-7 (Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services Authority); 49-15-301 (Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources); 73-67-9 (Mississippi State Board of Massage Therapy); 73-43-3 (Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure); 41-4-3 (State Board of Mental Health); 53-1-5 (State Oil and Gas Board); 47-7-5 (State Parole Board); 25-9-109 (Mississippi State Personnel Board); 47-5-541 (Board of Directors of Mississippi Prison Industries); 99-18-1 (Office of State Public Defender); 11-46-18 (Mississippi Tort Claims Board); 65-1-46 (Appeals Board of the Mississippi Transportation Commission); 35-1-1 (State Veterans Affairs Board); 73-39-55 (State Board of Veterinary Medicine); 49-4-4 (Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks); and 43-59-3 (Mississippi Commission on the Status of Women) shall have their term extended until Sine Die of the 2021 Session of the Mississippi Legislature.

II Any statute, rule or regulation that is inconsistent with this Executive Order, including one that would prevent any such interim or hold-over appointee from continuing to serve as a director, commissioner or member of such a state or regulatory agency, board or commission is hereby suspended.

III. Such interim or hold-over appointees shall have all rights, authority and duties conferred on a director, commissioner or member of the state or regulatory agency, board or commission on which they currently serve until the earlier of such time as he/she is replaced by the Governor (with advice and consent of the Senate) or Sine Die of the 2021 Session of the Mississippi Legislature.

IV. This Executive Order shall remain in full force and effect from the date of execution until Sine Die of the 2021 Session of the Mississippi Legislature, unless it is modified, amended, rescinded or suspended.

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 26TH 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