

Legislative Update: Mental Health Reform bill headed to the Governor's Desk

By Guest Columnist Rep. Tom Miles, State Representative from House District #75



Special to Pelahatchie News

This was the eleventh week of the 2023 Legislative Session. Because it is late in the session, much of the week was spent deciding whether to concur with any changes made to House bills by the Senate or to invite conference on those bills. In conference committees, we work together to finalize the details of each bill before they are sent to the governor. Included in the bills being sent to conference are most of the revenue and appropriations bills from the House and Senate, which will decide the state's budget.

I'm so excited to see **House Bill 1222**, a bill I sponsored and have worked on, the Mississippi Collaborative Response to Mental Health Act, headed to the Governor's desk for his signature. This is a bill that we have worked on for the last two years to help address the mental health crisis in our state. After over fifty meetings, public hearings and getting input from everyone in this field, we have passed a transformative piece of legislation. This, when signed into law, will provide funding, training for

law enforcement officers, more beds for mental health patients, and a host of other things to help improve mental health. This bill is transformative and will have a significant impact on our state for generations to come to help with mental health issues in our state.

Both the House and Senate agreed this week on passing **HB 4**. This is a bill that would ban the sale of tianeptine, commonly known as "gas station heroin." Tianeptine can have similar effects to opioids and can be sold in convenience stores. Those sales could soon stop in Mississippi when it becomes law. The bill is now in the hands of Gov. Tate Reeves.

Other legislative bills passed this week included:

- **House Bill 549** exempts certain businesses from paying sales tax on property transported from Mississippi and first used in another state.
- **House Bill 1723** authorizes up to \$1 million in tax credits for certain organizations supporting community food pantries or soup kitchens.
- **House Bill 1561** amends current law to allow tax exemption eligibility



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Pictured (l to r) are, Speaker Pro Tem Jason White, Representative Tom Miles, and Rev. Timothy Bobo Phillipson.

to "controlled environment agriculture enterprises meeting minimum criteria established by the Mississippi Development Authority."

• **Senate Bill 2449** amends existing law to allow taxation of certain computer software. "Sales of computer software, computer software services, specified digital products, or other products delivered electronically, including, but not limited to, music, games, reading materials or ringtones, shall be taxed as provided in other

sections of this chapter."

We were proud to see the Governor sign these 3 bill this week to help our military families:

1. **SB 2649** will streamline the process for any named beneficiaries of insurance policies for service members or veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.
2. **SB 2700** will exempt any qualified homeowners from property taxes on their primary residence if their spouse served in the military or was killed on active duty, including training.
3. **HB 49**, makes it easier for the children of active-duty service members born in the state to receive a sportsman hunting and fishing license for their lifetime. This ultimately does away with the usual 18 consecutive month residency requirement if they have moved due to their parents' service. It also reduces the fee by roughly 33 percent.

When the session resumed the week of March 20, it was expected that we would spend much of our time in conference committees ironing out the final details of bills that were sent to the conference. These conference committees will then have to file reports before the end of session.



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April 2023

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PHS Class Favorites and Who's Who election results

Special to Pelahatchie News

In March, Pelahatchie High School (PHS) students held elections for 2022-2023 Who's Who and Class Favorites.

Class Favorites that were elected are: 7th Grade: Mallarie Adams, Chase Parker; 8th grade: Jernmya Johnson, DaMarion Snow; 9th Grade: Skyylar Ousby, Tate Hopson; 10th Grade: Ava Till, Mickey Jennings; 11th Grade: JaLeah Ford, Jimmy Holifield; 12th Grade: Holly White, JT Magee.

Seniors, class of 2023, were chosen for Who's Who, and with some fun and unique character trait titles. Those students and titles are: **Best Smile:** Airanna Beeman, Tyler Bayliss; **Highway Hazard:** Leah Carter, Jabari Hodges; **Future Soccer Mom and Dad:** Hunter Cain, Holly White; **Teacher's Pet:** Eli Boyer, Airanna Beeman; **Best Dressed:** Madi Holmes, Jadan Boyd; **Most Athletic:** Symon Stringer, Maddie Grace Walters; **Most Likely to Be Late to Graduation:** Devan Sinclair, Alisha Cooper; **Most School Spirit:** Madi Holmes, Tyler Bayliss; **Most Intellectual:** Maley Johnson,



Hart Adams; **Senioritis:** William Cummins, Destinee Purvis; **Most Likely to Lose a Winning Lottery Ticket:** Mackenzie White, Eli Boyer; **Future Frat Boy / Sorority Girl:** Colton Bierman, Holly White; **Most Likely to Succeed:** Haley Adams, Hunter Cain; **Mr. PHS:** JT Magee; **Miss PHS:** Maddie Grace Walters.