



# Newsletter

SPRING 2018

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Jan Collins  
MCBL & F  
Executive Director

The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) reaches a major milestone in 2018! From its creation by the Madison County Board of Supervisors and the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) in 2008, the MCBL&F has strengthened into a strong voice for the Madison County business community. With a membership of influential chief executive leaders, the MCBL&F has made tremendous contributions to the support of economic development in our County.

Our efforts are designed to share in-depth information with our members through networking opportunities, and aid in MCEDA's efforts to attract new jobs.

The lists of accomplishments are numerous. The MCBL&F has hosted over 300 events uniting our business leaders and elected officials to make the necessary connections to develop relationships in order to advocate for policies addressing specific concerns which impact infrastructure, education, healthcare and quality of life. The MCBL&F grew stronger with the seamless merger of the Madison County Foundation in 2014, which enabled the formation of the Madison County Community Trust (MCCT). Partnering

with MCEDA and the Madison County Board of Supervisors, the MCBL&F helped facilitate and implement a 10 year Madison County strategic plan, conference center feasibility studies, engage the IHL and universities to provide economic development data, and support the county's legislative priorities with annual legislative agendas.

The Madison County Business League & Foundation committees involve members in timely topics of interest and projects that impact our county: Government Affairs, Education, Transportation, Health/Wellness and Entrepreneurship. Recognizing the need to provide professional development and networking opportunities for our young professionals, the board of directors established the Madison County Young Professional Committee. To avoid the brain drain of talent, the Madison County Youth Leadership program created in 2011 has graduated 234 of the best and brightest juniors from our public, private and parochial schools; exposing them to the many diverse careers available in Madison County. Upon completion of the program, the MCBL&F and MCCT proudly present each of these graduates with \$250.00 scholarships.

As you can see, there has been a lot of change in our organization over the past 10 years. I believe we have well positioned ourselves for the future. In order to continue this growth and keep engaged with the business needs, the MCBL&F will continue to find ways to update and provide benefits for our members and identify potential new members to strengthen our sphere of influence. In addition, I believe it is critical that we

continue to grow by engaging our young professionals.

I am honored to serve as your executive director and encourage and welcome communication with you, our members, and elected officials. Thank you for your support and participation. I hope that you will join me and the leadership of MCBL&F in helping MCEDA to promote the growth of our existing businesses and create an environment that attracts new industry so that we can continue the prosperous business climate and quality of life we so enjoy in Madison County!

*One vision, one voice,*  
Jan Collins  
Executive Director

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## 2018 MCLEAW PROCLAMATION

The Madison County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution proclaiming May 13 - 19, 2018, Madison County Law Enforcement Appreciation Week. The County economic development support organizations are collaborating for the 4th year to promote this event in each municipality and throughout Madison County to thank and commend our law enforcement community and first responders for their service. This event is in conjunction with National Law Enforcement Appreciation Week.



### **Standing (l-r):**

Paige Petersen, Executive Director Madison County Chamber of Commerce; Supervisor David Bishop; Sheriff Randy Tucker; Supervisor Paul Griffin; and Jan Collins, Executive Director Madison County Business League & Foundation

### **Shown seated (l-r):**

Supervisor Trey Baxter; Supervisor Sheila Jones, board president; Supervisor Gerald Steen

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★ MADISON COUNTY BUSINESS LEAGUE & FOUNDATION ★

<https://www.facebook.com/Madison-County-Business-League-and-Foundation-745934742265760/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/Madison-County-Young-Professionals-MCYP-397768113904721/>

★ MADISON COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP (MCYL) ★

<https://www.facebook.com/Madison-County-Youth-Leadership-MCYL-156780004902670/>

## HONORING SUPERINTENDENT DR. RONNIE McGEHEE

Superintendent of Madison County Schools, Dr. Ronnie McGehee, was honored at a Madison County Business League & Foundation breakfast on March 28, 2018, at the Madison County Schools District office in Ridgeland. Rep. Cory Wilson and Senator Walter Michel presented Dr. McGehee a joint resolution on behalf of the Mississippi State Legislature. Madison County Business League & Foundation Chairman, Phil Buffington, also presented a resolution to Dr. McGehee commending him for his



outstanding impact on quality education in Madison County during his 21 year tenure.

## MCLEAW BALLOON RELEASE



**Shown (l-r):** Madison/Rankin District Attorney Michael Guest, Sheriff Randy Tucker, Bugler PFC Mark Scott, Madison County Judge Ed Hannan, and Madison County Chancery Clerk Ronny Lott

The Madison County Business League & Foundation and the Madison County Chamber of Commerce hosted the 4th annual Madison County Law Enforcement Appreciation Week balloon release on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at the Madison County sheriff's office to honor our law enforcement officers and to remember those officers who have fallen in the line of duty.

## LEAGUE & LEGISLATURE



The Madison County Business League & Foundation hosted the 10th annual "League & Legislature" luncheon on Wednesday,

February 21, 2018, at the Old Capitol Inn in Jackson, MS. Over 375 MCBL&F Members, Statewide and Countywide elected officials, and MS Legislators were in attendance. Chairman Phil Buffington and MCBL&F Government Affairs Committee Chairman Trey Dellinger shared the 2018 legislative agenda. Governor Phil Bryant was the keynote speaker for the event. Entertaining was Raphael Semmes and his Jazz Ensemble, Pam Confer and Derrick Burt.



## EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BREAKFAST



*Dr. Carey Wright, Superintendent of Mississippi Schools, was the keynote speaker.*

The Madison County Business League & Foundation hosted an Education & Workforce Development Breakfast on March 28, 2018, at the Madison County Schools District office. Upon his retirement, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ronnie McGehee, was honored by the MCBL&F with a resolution detailing the many outstanding accomplishments during his tenure in office. Rep. Cory Wilson and Senator Walter Michel presented Dr. McGehee with a joint resolution from the Mississippi State Legislature.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS COMMITTEE BREAKFAST



The Madison County Business League & Foundation Health & Wellness Committee hosted MS Commissioner of Insurance & State Fire Marshall Mike Chaney on Wednesday, May 9, 2018. The breakfast meeting was held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Ridgeland, MS. Over 80 MCBL&F committee members and elected officials attended.

## 2018 LEAGUE & LAW ENFORCEMENT EVENT



*Chairman Phil Buffington presented a resolution, adopted by the MCBL&F Board of Directors, commending the efforts of the law enforcement community*

The Madison County Business League & Foundation hosted the 2018 League & Law Enforcement event on Wednesday, May 2nd at the Nissan Training Center in Canton. Over 100 law enforcement leaders, elected officials and MCBL&F Members attended. MS Attorney General Jim Hood was the keynote speaker.

## TRANSPORTATION BREAKFAST



The Madison County Business League & Foundation hosted a Transportation breakfast on Thursday, April 19, 2018, at Embassy Suites Hotel in Ridgeland, MS. Over 80 committee members and elected officials attended the event. Keynote speaker was Mississippi's Central District Transportation Commissioner Dick Hall. Madison County Engineer, Dan Gaillet, gave a status report on county roads. Other special guests comprising the panel were Senator Willie Simmons, Chairman of the MS Senate Transportation Committee, and Rep. Charles Busby, Chairman of the MS House of Representatives Transportation Committee.

MADISON COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS: "MISSISSIPPI BEAUTIFUL," WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY NISSAN'S PAM CONFER

\*\*\* [HTTP://MADISONCOUNTYBUSINESSLEAGUE.COM/MCBL-NEWS/MADISON-COUNTY-HIGHLIGHTS](http://MADISONCOUNTYBUSINESSLEAGUE.COM/MCBL-NEWS/MADISON-COUNTY-HIGHLIGHTS) \*\*\*

*Original song, "Mississippi Beautiful," written and performed by Nissan's Pam Confer at the annual League & Legislature luncheon on February 21, 2018, at the Old Capitol Inn in Jackson, MS. Governor Phil Bryant was the keynote speaker. The video was produced by Amile Clark Wilson for the Madison County Business League & Foundation featuring highlights of Madison County!*

## MADISON COUNTY OPPORTUNITY ZONES

MADISON COUNTY, MS (APRIL 16, 2018) - The U.S. Department of Treasury has designated three census tracts in Madison County, MS as Qualified Opportunity Zones to spur economic growth. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act authorized the governor of each U.S. state and territory to nominate a certain number of qualifying census tracts as "Opportunity Zones." Mississippi's designations were officially confirmed Tuesday, April 10th, by the Treasury Department, which administers the program.

The Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA), along with Madison County municipalities within eligible census tracts, nominated tracts for Governor Bryant's consideration and recommendation to the U.S. Department of Treasury for the Opportunity Zone designation.

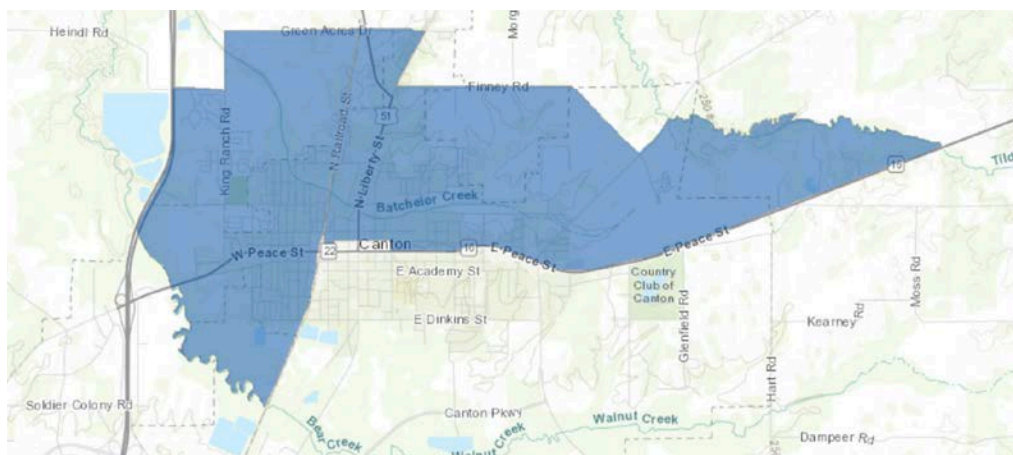
Joseph P. Deason, Executive Director of Madison County Economic Development said, "These three tracts, one in Ridgeland and two in Canton, will provide our communities the ability to attract private investment to encourage economic development in the form of jobs and assist neighborhood revitalization. We are all excited and look forward to receiving the next round of information concerning the program."

The Ridgeland Opportunity Zone is comprised of the area between South Wheatley Street to Old Canton Road (West to East) and Lake Harbour Drive to East County Line Road (North to South).

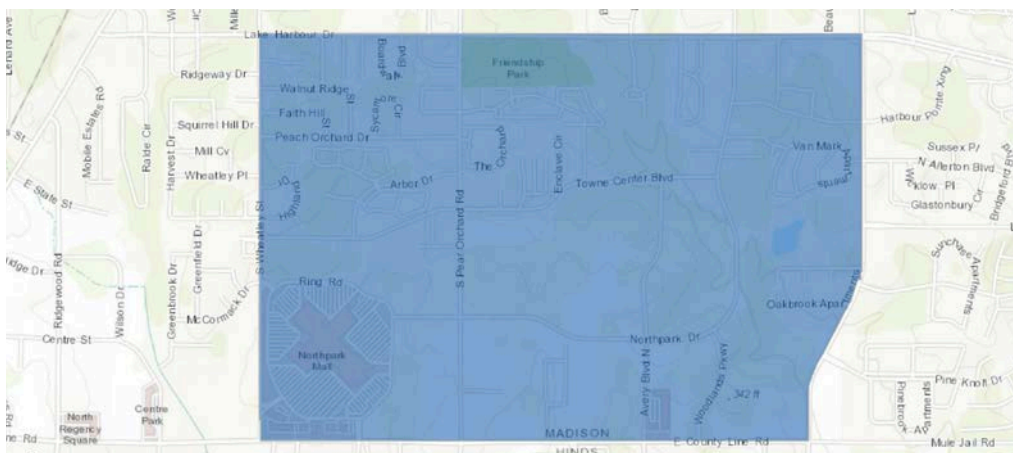
Mayor Gene McGee of Ridgeland said, "First of all, I would like to thank Governor Bryant for his leadership and designation of the Ridgeland Opportunity Zones. He continued, "We've been looking for opportunities for development and redevelopment in this area. We believe this will help the Northpark Mall area and provide opportunities to develop the land around the area that has been vacant. This is a Win-Win for The City of Ridgeland."

The Canton Opportunity Zones span from Interstate 55 in Canton and end just before Sharon Road (West to East) running along Peace Street and Hwy 16. These tracts are located within the Madison County Healthcare Zone.

Dr. William Truly, Jr., Mayor of Canton said, "The City of Canton is more than ecstatic to be chosen



*Canton Opportunity Zone*



*Ridgeland Opportunity Zone*

as one of the communities for the Opportunity Zone. This opportunity allows investors to take a serious look at the City of Canton for economic development. If there's a city that needs economic development, it's the City of Canton. He continued, "We wish to thank MCEDA for serving as a bridge to help us get designated as an Opportunity Zone. The City of Canton is pleased to be chosen by Governor Bryant to receive 2 of the 100 designated Opportunity Zones in Mississippi."

Qualified Opportunity Zones retain this designation for 10 years. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains until no later than December 31, 2026, so long as the gain is reinvested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund, an investment vehicle organized to make investments in Qualified Opportunity Zones. In addition, if the investor

holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least ten years, the investor would be eligible for an increase in its basis equal to the fair market value of the investment on the date that it is sold.

Treasury and the IRS plan to issue additional information on Qualified Opportunity Funds. The additional guidance will address the certification of Opportunity Funds, which are required to have at least 90 percent of fund assets invested in Opportunity Zones. For additional information on Opportunity Zones, please go to <https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>.

\*\*\* LINK TO ONLINE MAPS \*\*\*

[https://www.cims.cdfifund.gov/preparation/default.aspx?config=config\\_nmrc.xml](https://www.cims.cdfifund.gov/preparation/default.aspx?config=config_nmrc.xml)





## MADISON COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

### MCYP CHAIR COLUMN



*Sarah Beth Wilson  
MCYP Chairman*

The Madison County Young Professionals (MCYP) hosted a very successful Reality Fair in January for 200+ Canton High School freshmen, where students learned about everything from how to write a check and what life insurance is to budgeting for daily expenses and saving for a home or automobile purchase! To all of our local businesses and young professionals whom sponsored and participated in this event, thank you! In early-April, the MCYPs accepted an invitation from Friends of Children's Hospital to raise money to put one of its young professionals "Over the Edge"; thanks to generous sponsors willing to pitch-in on short notice, the MCYPs met their fundraising goal. On Saturday, April 21, immediate past-Chair Chris Roberts of BankPlus repelled down the side of the Trustmark Corporate Office in downtown Jackson, and checks amounting to over \$2,000 were delivered to the Friends of Children's Hospital benefiting patients and families of Blair E. Batson. The MCYP then held its 2018 Spring Social on the evening of April 26 at the recently-opened Mercedes-Benz of Jackson located in Ridgeland, and the event was a resounding success, having over 100 young professionals from all industries in attendance. **SAVE THE DATE:** The MCYP Steering Committee is finalizing plans for its next event, an Executive Leadership Forum / Luncheon taking place on August 29 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Ridgeland. The MCYPs will also be invited for a Nissan Plant tour on a date to be announced in June!



(MCYP) announces that they will host, in partnership with Canton Public Schools, the first ever REALITY FAIR for 208 freshmen in the gym at Canton High School (CHS) on Wednesday, January 24, 2018, from 9:00 AM to Noon.

Recognizing the importance of quality education in the attraction of economic development in Madison County, the MCYP Committee chose financial literacy as their philanthropy. In the spring of 2017, The MCYP Committee was

### CHS REALITY FAIR

The Madison County Business League & Foundation Young Professional Committee

awarded a \$5,000.00 grant from the Madison County Community Trust (MCCT) to train CHS teachers to incorporate financial literacy in their fall curriculum. This Reality fair will test the students' skills in money management.

Teachers will assign occupations and monthly salaries for each student. The students will visit 14 stations including housing, transportation, utilities, food, health insurance, clothing, communications, and credit union, along with temptations such as entertainment, gym/sports, pets, and salon/beauty.

The objective is to have enough money to pay for their expenses which will afford them the lifestyles they desire. Over 60 MCYPs will man the stations and provide real world experience/mentoring.

### MCYP RAISE FUNDS FOR BLAIR E. BATSON



The Madison County Young Professionals (MCYP) sponsored Past Chairman and 2017 Madison County Young Professional of the Year, Chris Roberts, to repel the Trustmark building

in Jackson to raise awareness and funds for the Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital at UMMC. The MCYPs want to thank Adams & Reese, BancorpSouth, BankPlus, Copeland Cook Taylor & Bush, St. Dominic Health Services, Southern Ag Credit and the Madison County Business League & Foundation for their generous support.

### 2018 MCYP SPRING SOCIAL



The Madison County Young Professionals hosted a Spring Networking Social on Thursday, April 26, 2018, at the new Mercedes-Benz of Jackson dealership in Ridgeland, MS. Over 100 YPs attended and enjoyed food and beverages by Char and music by Aa'Keela Hudnall. The Madison County Business League & Foundation sponsors the MCYP program and thanks Mercedes-Benz of Jackson for their gracious hospitality in sharing their beautiful new showroom for this event!

WEDNESDAY

**AUGUST  
29**

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Embassy Suites Hotel  
Ridgeland, MS

RESERVED SEATING ONLY

RSVP by August 24, 2018

Collins.jan01@gmail.com

**\$25.00**

[madisoncountybusinessleague.com](http://madisoncountybusinessleague.com)

MADISON COUNTY  
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

**Executive Leadership  
Forum  
and Luncheon**



YPs must be 39 and under and work for a company that is a member of the Madison County Business League & Foundation.



# MADISON COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP

## MCYL CHAIRMAN COLUMN



Dr. Don Burnham  
MCYL Chairman

The MCBL&F Education Committee completed a successful year during 2017-2018. Junior students living in Madison County from each of the public, private and parochial schools in the county along with Jackson Academy, Jackson Prep and New Summit School attended a three day (Career Day, Government Day and Lifestyles Day) youth leadership program. The program encourages leadership skills growth and showcases the amenities that exist within Madison County. Scholarships were awarded to each of these students and on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the Madison County Community Trust which sponsored the scholarships and is also engaged in other educational related projects in Madison County.

Finally, the charts depicting ACT Scores, Graduation Rates and National Merit Finalists numbers by school along with workforce training have been updated and can be viewed at [www.mctheroadahead.com](http://www.mctheroadahead.com). We have a lot to be proud of and thankful for in Madison County.

### LINKS TO REPORTS/DOCUMENTS

#### ★ MADISON COUNTY ACADEMIC SCORES ★

<http://madisoncountybusinessleague.com/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=147002&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11590582&ObjectID=147002&ObjectType=6>

#### ★ 2017 MADISON COUNTY ECONOMIC INDICATORS ★

<http://madisoncountybusinessleague.com/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=146954&A=SearchResult&SearchID=11590586&ObjectID=146954&ObjectType=6>

## CPS GRANT PRESENTATION



The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) and the Madison County Community Trust (MCCT) awarded a grant to Canton Public Schools to facilitate testing for 46 high school students to take the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate exam at Holmes Community College.

Shown making the presentation are (l-r) Jan Collins, MCBL&F Executive Director, Dr. Don Burnham, MCBL&F Education Committee Chairman, Dr. Cassandra Williams, Former Superintendent Canton Public Schools, and Mike Crandall, Education Committee Member.

## GOVERNMENT DAY



The Madison County Youth Leadership class attended Government Day on Wednesday, February 28th. Representative Cory Wilson opened the day by addressing and engaging with the class during a breakfast hosted by Citizens Bank.

Afterward, the group took a tour of the Mississippi Capital, where the students met seven of our Mississippi Legislators. They also visited with state wide elected officials after being introduced in the senate and house chambers. Lunch was held at the Two Mississippi Museums and was sponsored by Parkway Church. Pastor Jason Dillon joined them and encouraged the youth leaders to participate in their local government. The day ended with a tour of the Governor's Mansion. Governor Phil Bryant greeted the class before their tour. Overall the Madison County Youth Leadership students were given a full introduction to our Mississippi government.

## MCYL LIFESTYLE DAY



On Wednesday, March 21st the Madison County Youth Leadership participated in Lifestyles Day. Madison County Board Attorney Katie Bryant Snell was the keynote speaker. They had the opportunity to tour the Madison

County Detention Center, MADCAAP, Nissan, and DeBeukelaer. Breakfast was sponsored by Belhaven University and Lunch, at Sombra, was sponsored by the Mississippi Community Education Center & Families First.



# 2018 MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATIVE SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



Cory Wilson  
MS House Representative  
District 73

The 2018 Regular Legislative Session is in the books. There is talk about a Special Session at some point to address funding for roads and bridges, and possibly a state lottery, but as of this writing, Governor Bryant has not issued a call to bring legislators back to Jackson. Now that the dust has settled, there has been a little time to think about some of the measures passed, along with some key unfinished business. Here's a summary of some of the legislation we considered this year:

## Significant Measures That Passed

- **State budget:** The outlook for Mississippi's economy appears to be strengthening. Our unemployment rate remains at or near record lows, and a boost in the economy provided an extra \$56 million for the FY 2019 budget. The total budget totals approximately \$6 billion. We provided small increases for education, Child Protective Services, the Department of Public Health and the Department of Public Safety. The additional funding for DPS will go to address our critical shortage of state medical examiners and to fund a small trooper school. We also set aside two percent of revenues for the state's rainy day fund.

- **House Bill 1649 – Bond Bill:** After legislators did not agree on a bond bill in 2017, we passed a measure this year that allocates \$250 million worth of bonds for the following:

- \$50 million to the Local Bridge Repair and Rehabilitation Program (LSBP)
- \$82.5 million for universities
- \$25 million for community colleges
- \$45 million for Ingalls Shipyard
- \$40 million for the Department of Finance and Administration
- Money for loan programs for small cities and counties to assist with sewer and water projects

- **Senate Bill 2836 – Medicaid “Technical Bill.”** The law that sets forth many of the technical provisions governing the state's Medicaid program – a \$1 billion program – was set to sunset this year, so there was a good bit of debate about renewing that law, and improving it to incentivize cost savings while preserving access to care. In the end, we reauthorized the law to include the following provisions:

- Managed care companies must pay the same reimbursement rate as the legislature-set rates for Medicaid;
- Deleted the annual limit on physician visits, home health service visits and the monthly prescription limit;
- Reimbursement for treatment for those experiencing opioid dependency; and
- Reimbursements for OB/GYNs and psychiatrists.

- **House Bill 1306 – Construction Dispute Resolution Agreements.** This bill provides that certain construction agreements that require dispute resolution outside the state or restrict the parties' choice of law shall be void. The new law provides that for construction projects in Mississippi, disputes must be resolved in the state.

- **Senate Bill 2526 – Administrative Procedures Act.** This bill expands on HB1425 from the 2017 Session, which set up the Occupational Licensing Oversight Commission to check occupational licensing regulations and set state policy in favor of less regulation and more economic opportunity. The new bill requires occupational licensing boards to review their rules every three years, and submit a report to the Oversight Commission. Hopefully, this will lead boards to reduce regulatory burdens and enhance free market opportunity.

- **House Bill 709 – Prescription Drugs Consumer Affordable Alternative Payment Options Act.** Pharmacists will now be able to tell patients if their copay exceeds the amount of the medication they are buying.

This will allow consumers to know the most affordable options for their medication.

- **Senate Bill 2459 – This new law protects veterans by expanding reemployment protections for military servicemen and veterans.** It ensures that a service member or veteran will be restored to his or her previous position after returning from training in another state.

## Significant Legislation That Failed:

Most of the thousands of bills that are filed each year do not survive to become law (thank goodness). In fact, one of my bills (among those that died this year), House Bill 347, would provide that the legislature meet only every other year. I'd like to see the legislature convene less, and focus more on key priorities. But I digress. There were some important agenda items that died this year, a point of frustration for me and for many legislators.

**Transportation.** We continue to work on a plan to increase funding for roads and bridges. Stay tuned; funding infrastructure is a critical issue for economic growth in Mississippi, and Madison County. The House and Senate passed proposals to provide additional funding for roads and bridges, but in the end, only approved a \$50 million bond bill for local bridge repairs. Some of the House proposals include:

- A set aside of state revenue growth of more than two percent for the repair and reconstruction of state, county and municipal roads and bridges;

- A new diversion of 35 percent of the use tax collected by the state to localities for the repair, maintenance and reconstruction of local roads, streets and bridges. Overall, this would mean that approximately \$108 million would be dedicated to improving the state's infrastructure;

- Bonding authority for a number of significant road projects around the state, including \$8 million for the Reunion Parkway; and

- Debt set-off provisions to allow municipalities to collect unpaid fines from the tax refunds of those who owe them. The City of Ridgeland, for example, has about \$7 million in unpaid balances, half of which would go to the state, if collected.

**Education Funding Formula.** The House passed a significant overhaul of the current education funding formula, but the bill died in the Senate. House Bill 957 was based on a series of recommendations from the consulting group EdBuild. The proposed formula based school funding on student enrollment and student needs. HB 957 also included significant transparency, and a process to roll back bureaucracy and regulations to allow our schools more flexibility and innovation. The bill expressly gave local control to districts in spending education tax dollars. For me, “the way we have always done it,” and “throwing more money at the problem,” are not answers. Instead, we should consider sensible reform that targets education funding in a more equitable and straightforward way, puts money into the classroom, and incentivizes strong performance like we have seen in Madison County public schools.

**BP Settlement Funds.** Another unresolved issue is how to allocate the \$750 million BP settlement. These funds represent economic damages payments as a result of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and will be paid over 17 years. Coast lawmakers want the money reserved for projects on the Coast, but some upstate lawmakers want funding allocated across the state. Several proposals were debated during the Session, but no agreement was reached.

**A Lottery.** Though it garnered a good bit of attention, all bills that would have established a state lottery died in committee. One amendment to an appropriation bill to require a state lottery to be established passed the House by a voice vote, but was later removed in conference. With the legalization of sports betting by the U.S. Supreme Court looming large in Mississippi, it's a safe bet that the lottery will also continue to be debated.

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