



February 7, 2017

REALTOR® Day at the Capitol took place on February 2, 2017 and we had over 200 REALTORS® visit our state Capitol! We heard remarks from Governor Phil Bryant, Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves, Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, Treasurer Lynn Fitch, and Insurance Commissioner Mike Chaney. The 2016 Legislators of the Year awards were presented to Senator Rita Parks and Speaker Philip Gunn. After the legislative briefing, MAR members visited with their Representatives and Senators to discuss the 2017 Legislative Priorities for the Mississippi REALTORS®.

Today marks the sixth week of the 2017 Legislative Session. January 31<sup>st</sup> was the deadline for committees to report on bills originating in their committees. Around 2,000 bills were filed and referred to committees; however, about 500 bills remain active ([here](#) is the link to measures still alive). The deadline for floor action on bills originating in their own house is Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to see Revenue bills referred to committees as we approach the February 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline for committees to report on Revenue bills.

Here is the Mississippi Legislature website:

<http://www.legislature.ms.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Here is the link to the Calendar with Legislative Deadlines:

<http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/htmls/timetable.xml>

Below you will find MAR's current legislative priorities, where they are in the process, as well as links to the legislation. Items with the (\*) indicate a Revenue or Appropriations bill and are not subject to the same deadlines as the General bills.

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**First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account** - First-time home buyer savings accounts can be used for saving funds for the purchase of homes by first-time home buyers. Money in the account is required to be used solely for the down payment and closing costs for the purchase of a home by a first-time home buyer. The ability to produce a hefty down payment is often a major hurdle for first-time homebuyers, particularly young people who are grappling with massive student loan debt. The issue has become a critical concern for members of the real estate community, who have noticed a steady decline in the number of first-time and young home buyers in the market.

- [SB 2439\\*](#) - Senator Joey Fillingane -- Mississippi REALTORS® **SUPPORT** this legislation.

- \*Representative Jeff Smith (Chairman, Ways and Means) sponsored the House of Representatives version of the First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account bill. At this point, the bill has not been referred to a committee.

**Home Inspector Licensure Law** – This legislation extends the repealer on the Home Inspector Licensure bill passed into law in 2013.

- [SB 2017](#) - *Senator Rita Parks* – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill passed the Senate 51-0 and has been transmitted to the House of Representatives.

**Commercial Broker Lien Law** – This legislation removes the repealer for the Commercial Real Estate Broker Lien Act passed into law in 2014.

- [SB 2425](#) - *Senator Josh Harkins* – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill passed the Senate 51-0 and has been transmitted to the House of Representatives.
- [HB 814](#) - *Representative Jason White* – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill passed out of the House of Representatives Judiciary A committee and is on the House calendar for a floor vote. This bill must be reported out of the House of Representatives by Thursday February 9<sup>th</sup> to remain alive.

**REALTOR® License Plate** – This legislation amends the language concerning the official Mississippi Association of REALTORS® license plate funds. The recipient of the funds shall be the Mississippi REALTORS® Disaster Relief Fund.

- [HB 694](#) - *Representative Mark Formby* – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill passed the House of Representatives 119-0 and has been transmitted to the Senate.
- [SB 2157](#) – *Senator Bob Dearing and Senator Hillman Frazier* – This bill contains several license plates for different associations, including the REALTOR® license plate. The bill passed the Senate 51-0 and was transmitted to the House of Representatives.

**Landlord-Tenant Law** - The Mississippi REALTORS® consider any amendment to the Landlord Tenant Act and Residential Landlord Tenant Act to be of the highest priority and the Mississippi REALTORS® wish to monitor any proposed changes as they are considered.

- [HB 843](#) - *Representative Chris Johnson* – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this bill as written and are monitoring the legislation for additional amendments.** This bill passed out of the House of Representatives Judiciary A committee and is on the calendar for a floor vote. This bill must be reported out of the House of Representatives by Thursday February 9<sup>th</sup> to remain alive.

**Civil Asset Forfeiture/Seizure** - Mississippi REALTORS® support enhancement and protection of procedural due process for all Mississippians who are subjected to seizure of property.

- [HB 812](#) - Representative Mark Baker – **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill passed the House of Representatives 118-3 and was transmitted to the Senate.

**Tax Credits for Historic Structures** - Mississippi REALTORS® support extending income tax credits for costs and expenses incurred for the rehabilitation of certain historic structures to include Single Family Dwellings.

- [SB 2938\\*](#) – Senator Briggs Hopson– **Mississippi REALTORS® SUPPORT this legislation.** This bill was referred to the Senate Finance committee and must pass out of committee by the February 22<sup>nd</sup> Deadline.
- \*Representative Jeff Smith (Chairman, Ways and Means) sponsored the House of Representatives version of the Historic Tax Credit bill. At this point, the bill has not been referred to a committee.

**Infrastructure** - The Mississippi REALTORS® recognize the need to increase funding for vital transportation infrastructure needs at the state and local level. To address the infrastructure needs of the state, the Mississippi REALTORS® support reasonable and responsible funding mechanisms to raise revenues necessary to address vital infrastructure needs.

- No bills to report at this point. MAR will continue to monitor as the February 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline for Revenue bills approaches.
- [HB 480](#) – Representative Trey Lamar – This bill, commonly referred to as “The Internet Sales Tax,” requires out of state merchants who sell \$250,000 or more worth of goods to collect a sales tax on items sold. The bill was amended in committee to require all revenue collected from this program to be allocated to roads and bridges on the state and local level. Proponents of the bill cite the policy as a way to capture revenue (that should already be collected based on a previous law) and address the infrastructure needs of the state. Opponents of the bill identify the bill as a “tax increase” and “unconstitutional” under the commerce clause and a nearly identical bill was passed in Alabama and the legislation is currently under judicial review. The House passed HB 480 by a vote of 77-40, but the bill was held on a motion to reconsider. The motion to reconsider was tabled and the bill was transmitted to the Senate.

**Tax on Services** - Mississippi REALTORS® strongly oppose any tax on real estate services or commissions.

- No bills to report at this point. MAR will continue to monitor as the February 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline for Revenue bills approaches.