



A CONSERVATIVE PLATFORM FOR MISSISSIPPI

2023



MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR
PUBLIC POLICY

DECEMBER 2022

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All of Mississippi's state-wide elected offices have been controlled by self-identified "conservatives" since at least 2015.

This platform, published by the Mississippi Center for Public Policy on behalf of Mississippi's overwhelmingly conservative electorate, offers conservative lawmakers a policy program on important issues.

A true conservative legislator in Mississippi would support the following:

BUDGET, TAX, AND SPENDING

TAXES Oppose any effort to raise taxes in our state.

CORPORATION TAX Support a reduction in the corporate income tax rate in our state.

PERSONAL STATE INCOME TAX Even after the 2022 Mississippi Tax Freedom Act, which significantly cut the state income tax, our state budget still has a massive structural surplus. Conservatives should support further cuts in the state income tax, with triggers put in place to ensure the surplus is returned to the taxpayer, not squandered by politicians.

DEFICIT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS Support legislation to require state agencies to better manage their budgets. A new requirement to report deficits in a timely manner would enable our state officials to better manage the overall budget.

The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will publish a detailed, carefully costed draft budget for 2023, which will show what further tax cuts should look like.

America was founded on the idea that power comes from the people. Too often in Mississippi, power is in the hands of vested interests in Jackson. To change that, conservatives should support the following:

RECALL Back legislation that would give local residents the power to remove locally elected officials when they fail. Too many mayors in our state are not effectively accountable outside of election time.

RIGHT OF INITIATIVE Support a real right of initiative. Ever since the State Supreme Court ruled against the vote in favor of medical marijuana, our state has been without a right of popular initiative. Conservatives should support a bill that would fix the trigger system and allow the public to vote to change state law.

MISSISSIPPI REINS ACT Bureaucrats like to make decisions and spend taxpayers' money without accountability. To combat this, conservatives in our state should support the "Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny" (REINS) bill. If a rule with a cost impact of over \$200,000 is being proposed, it should not become effective until the Legislature approves it.

DOWNSIZE BUREAUCRACY Conservatives in Mississippi should be as concerned about the growth of the administrative state in our state as we are about the growth of the administrative state in Washington, D.C. Does Mississippi really need a State Board of Massage Therapy? Multiple other states have massage therapy in their jurisdiction without the need for an entire board. Do we really need a separate State Board of Physical Therapists? Or a State Board of Funeral Services? Half of the states in America seem to manage without a State Board of Barber Examiners.

***The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will publish
model legislation to reform the Right of Initiative
and introduce a REINS Act in our state.***

It sometimes seems as if an extreme “woke” ideology is being advanced across America. To counter this, there are several things Mississippi conservatives should do.

ANTI-ESG Support an anti-ESG bill. The ESG (Environmental Social and Governance) agenda promoted by big money managers is forcing publicly listed corporations to promote a “woke” agenda. An anti-ESG bill will help restore the voices of everyday citizens in the economy. Trustees of public funds would be required to invest on the basis of excellence, not “woke” politics.

A WOMEN’S BILL OF RIGHTS The Women’s Bill of Rights is model legislation which simply codifies, for purposes of law and regulations, the common sense—and previously self-evident—definition of “woman.” It is rooted in biology and protects certain single-sex spaces as not only legal but necessary for safety, privacy, and fairness.

A PARENTS’ BILL OF RIGHTS Young people have been subjected to irreversible gender reassignment procedures that they have subsequently come to regret. We believe that any Parents’ Bill of Rights should make it illegal for medical practitioners to undertake irreversible gender reassignment procedures on anyone under the age of 18.

The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will promote draft bills and work with allies to build a coalition to give them legal effect.

If handouts from Washington, D.C. made a state rich, Mississippi would be one of the wealthiest states in the Union. Instead we are among the poorest. To change this, we need to encourage more innovation and enterprise.

SANDBOX BILL Back laws that allow innovation. We live in an age when technology is rapidly advancing like never before. Innovators need regulatory flexibility that allows them to grow technologies and establish businesses without being smothered by outdated regulations. Using a regulatory sandbox program, innovators could apply for regulatory flexibility if they are being hampered by outdated or inapplicable regulations.

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES Support legislation to allow home-based businesses. In the last couple of years, Mississippi has seen among highest increase of new businesses of any state in the nation. Despite the state’s high level of entrepreneurship, little protection exists for home businesses from onerous regulations that might force them out of business. We propose legislation that prohibits local governments from imposing such undue burdens.

The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will promote draft Bills, and work with allies to build a coalition to give them legal effect.

TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION Support laws that ensure parents are able to see what their children are being taught. School curricular materials should be posted online by each school board, as well as details of the content educators use for teacher professional development training sessions.

SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM Support a review of the existing school funding formula, the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP), with a view to adopting a formula that funds students, not a system.

CHARTER SCHOOLS Back legislation that would break the monopoly of the Charter School Authorizer Board, which has acted as a roadblock to new Charter Schools.

CURB SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION COSTS Back legislation that would curb the ability of school boards to award administrators sky-high salaries.

UNIVERSITY TENURE Vote to end tenure for faculty on current terms, in line with a law that Florida passed. Instead, there needs to be more accountability with far greater use of fixed-term contracts.

The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will work with allied organizations to publish and promote legislation to enable each of these reforms and to review how to better fund education in our state.

Mississippi has some of the worst health outcomes in the country. Conservatives should be advocates for change. Rather than seeking to hose federal dollars at our health care system, we should prioritize cutting the costs of health care.

ELIMINATE ANTI-HEALTHCARE AND ANTI-COMPETITIVE CERTIFICATE OF NEED PROCESS

The certificate of need (CON) process requires healthcare providers to get permission from state officials before they are able to expand. Conservatives should vote to eliminate CON laws and support legislation to end CON for mental health and low-cost health care in particular.

PHARMACISTS Vote in favor of allowing qualified pharmacists to prescribe certain medicines, thereby reducing delays and costs for patients. Where patients have a condition that does not require a new diagnosis or are minors, we believe professional pharmacists should be able to prescribe medication.

NURSE PRACTITIONERS Vote to allow highly trained nurse practitioners to undertake more medical procedures. Antiquated laws still presume that they are unable to do so without supervision from doctors.

OUT-OF-STATE PROVIDERS Support allowing providers to practice across state lines. We should follow Florida's lead and allow out-of-state providers to practice telehealth in our state. This would lower costs and increase availability.

The Mississippi Center for Public Policy will work with allied organizations to publish and promote legislation to enable each of these reforms in the coming session.



**MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR
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520 GEORGE STREET
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39202
(601) 969-1300

MSPOLICY.ORG