

By: Senator(s) Wiggins, Tindell, Moran,
Gollott, Watson

To: Ports and Marine
Resources; Accountability,
Efficiency, Transparency

SENATE BILL NO. 2579
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES
2 ACCOUNTABILITY AND REORGANIZATION ACT; TO AMEND SECTION 49-15-11,
3 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE
4 DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES; TO CREATE CERTAIN OFFICES WITHIN
5 THE DEPARTMENT; TO PROVIDE QUALIFICATIONS FOR CERTAIN AGENCY
6 PERSONNEL; TO EXEMPT PERSONNEL ACTIONS FOR SIX MONTHS FROM THE
7 STATE PERSONNEL BOARD TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY
8 REORGANIZATION; TO REQUIRE AN ANNUAL AUDIT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
9 MARINE RESOURCES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-15-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
12 amended as follows:

13 49-15-11. (1) The Mississippi Department of Marine
14 Resources is hereby established and full power is vested in the
15 department to manage, control, supervise, enforce and direct any
16 matters pertaining to saltwater aquatic life and marine resources
17 under the jurisdiction of the commission.

18 (2) The Executive Director of the Department of Marine
19 Resources shall have the authority to internally reorganize the
20 Department of Marine Resources. For a period of * * * six (6)
21 months after * * * passage of this act, the personnel actions of



22 the executive director shall be exempt from State Personnel Board
23 rules, regulations and procedures in order to give the executive
24 director flexibility in making an orderly, effective and timely
25 reorganization of the Department of Marine Resources.

26 (3) The department shall be composed of the following
27 offices:

- 28 (a) Office of Coastal Resources Management;
- 29 (b) Office of Finance and Administration;
- 30 (c) Office of Marine Fisheries;
- 31 (d) Office of Marine Patrol; and
- 32 (e) Office of Coastal Restoration and Resiliency.

33 Each office shall be composed of the administrative units as
34 set forth in the reorganization plan developed by the executive
35 director.

36 (4) The following agency personnel shall be appointed by the
37 executive director:

38 (a) Chief Financial Officer who shall have a minimum of
39 a Master's degree in Business Administration, Accounting or
40 related field and a minimum of five (5) years' experience in
41 business management or accounting practice.

42 (b) Chief of Marine Patrol who shall be a certified law
43 enforcement officer with a minimum of ten (10) years of law
44 enforcement experience.

45 (c) Chief Scientific Officer who shall have a minimum
46 of a Master's degree in Coastal Sciences or related field with a



47 minimum of five (5) years of experience in coastal resource
48 management or equivalent experience.

49 (5) The executive director shall have an annual audit of the
50 department, including the accounts established in Section
51 49-15-17, performed by an independent certified public accountant
52 and shall file the audit report with the commission, the Chairman
53 of the Senate Ports and Marine Resources Committee, the Chairman
54 of the House Marine Resources Committee, the State Auditor and the
55 Legislative Budget Office.

56 (* * *6) Whenever the terms "Mississippi Marine
57 Conservation Commission," "Marine Conservation Commission,"
58 "Bureau of Marine Resources" and "Mississippi Marine Resources
59 Council" appear in any state law, they shall mean the "Mississippi
60 Commission on Marine Resources."

61 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
62 and after its passage.

