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2020 Session to Reconvene Thursday (May 7), Legislative Leadership to Release Plan to Help Small Businesses

Jackson, Miss. – By agreement of Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann and Speaker of the House Philip Gunn, the Mississippi Legislature will reconvene the 2020 Legislative Session at 1 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, 2020.

Legislative leadership is working together on a plan to help small businesses across the State that are struggling amid COVID-19. Legislation establishing the program will set parameters and allocate funds to a State agency to administer.

“The backbone of our economy in Mississippi is our small businesses, and now they need our support,” Speaker of the House Philip Gunn said. “The two chambers will act together to provide relief as quickly as possible this week.”

Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann agreed.

“We know Mississippi’s small businesses—our local restaurants, barber shops, hair salons, and retail shops—need help. Our legislators are best prepared to meet their needs because they represent the entirety of the State,” Hosemann said.

The Legislature recessed its 125-day Session temporarily on Wednesday, March 18, following the Governor's issuance of a State of Emergency related to COVID-19. On Friday, May 1, the Legislature reconvened, and voted to place \$100 million into an account for the Governor to allocate for emergency expenses.

State agencies have already started to draw down other federal relief money provided to agencies and programs under the CARES Act.

Hosemann, Gunn, and members of the Legislature continue to analyze the impact of the pandemic and federal funds from the CARES Act relief package on the State's emergency response efforts, healthcare facilities, and wider state budget. Agencies are reporting their COVID-19-related expenses for possible reimbursement to legislative leadership, but have said they currently have the funds required to meet immediate needs.

Legislative leadership is also working now on establishing protocol for working within and visiting the Capitol as shelter-in-place restrictions begin to be lifted. Their goal is to allow as much access as possible while prioritizing the health and safety of those in the building.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

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