



# Mississippi Business Alliance

— ADVOCATING FOR A STRONGER  
MISSISSIPPI ECONOMY —

# 2026 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

2026 SESSION RECAP  
& REPORT CARD



ADVOCATE  
for Smart Policy



PROMOTE  
Economic Growth



PROTECT  
Business Competitiveness



BUILD  
A Stronger Mississippi



# Mississippi Business Alliance

ADVOCATING FOR A STRONGER MISSISSIPPI ECONOMY

## ONE MODERN ALLIANCE

### Convene. Advocate. Educate.

Built on MEC, MMA, and BIPEC, MSBA connects business, policy, and opportunity with one voice.

## BUILT ON LEGACY

# United for Mississippi Business

MSBA brings together decades of service to Mississippi employers, uniting trusted voices in business advocacy, manufacturing, and policy education into one statewide alliance.

## LEGACY ORGANIZATIONS



The State Chamber of Commerce  
**Mississippi Economic Council**

### STATE CHAMBER SINCE 1949

## Mississippi Economic Council

MEC served as Mississippi's statewide chamber, convening employers and public leaders around education, workforce, infrastructure, and a competitive business climate.



**Mississippi Manufacturers Association**

### VOICE OF INDUSTRY SINCE 1951

## Mississippi Manufacturers Association

MMA represented manufacturers across the state, advancing competitive tax, workforce, and regulatory policies while strengthening industry through services and connections.



### POLICY EDUCATION SINCE 1980

## BIPEC

BIPEC provided non-partisan research on candidates, elected officials, legislative votes, and key judicial races to help employers understand decisions affecting the business climate.

*From legacy to leadership*

With research, relationships, and results, MSBA is built to help Mississippi employers grow - and to move Business. Forward.



Dear MSBA Members,

Mississippi’s economy is moving forward, and the decisions made at the State Capitol will help determine how far and how fast that momentum reaches every part of our state.

The 2026 Legislative Session marked an important first chapter for the Mississippi Business Alliance. As Mississippi’s state chamber of commerce and unified voice for employers, MSBA entered the session with a clear purpose: to support job creators, improve competitiveness, help businesses of every size and sector grow, advance policies that strengthen our economy and oppose policies that would hinder it.

That mission extends beyond any single bill or industry. It is about building a business climate that attracts investment, rewards work, prepares our people for opportunity, and gives employers the confidence to expand in Mississippi. It is about dependable infrastructure, reliable and competitive energy, a fair tax and regulatory environment, workforce readiness, site development, access to health care, a fair legal climate, and state government efficiency and stability.

Throughout the session, MSBA worked to bring clarity, accountability, and a strong business perspective to the legislative process. We supported practical, pro-growth solutions and opposed measures that would make it harder to hire, invest, build, or do business in Mississippi. Our focus remained on a simple but essential question: will this help Mississippi grow?

This report is designed to help answer that question.

Inside, you will find an overview of the major business issues considered during the 2026 Legislative Session, the outcomes that matter most to Mississippi’s economy, and MSBA’s assessment of how lawmakers engaged on issues affecting employers, workers, and communities. The legislative report card reflects both recorded votes and broader engagement on business and jobs issues, including whether legislators demonstrated openness, consistency, and support for policies that promote growth, investment, and opportunity.

We do not take this responsibility lightly. This report is an accountability tool based on alignment with MSBA’s pro-growth priorities and the real-world concerns of employers across our state.

Mississippi is competing every day for capital, talent, projects, entrepreneurs, supply chains, and high-quality jobs. Other states are not standing still, and neither will we. To win, we must continue improving the fundamentals that make Mississippi a place where businesses choose to locate, expand, and stay.

We are grateful to the elected officials who listened to employers, engaged in good faith, and supported policies that move Mississippi forward. We are equally grateful to MSBA members whose insight and advocacy shaped our work throughout the session.

**Thank you for your commitment to Mississippi’s future and for your partnership in moving BUSINESS. FORWARD.**

Sincerely,



**John McKay**

MSBA President & CEO



**John Hairston**

MSBA Chairman



**Mississippi  
Business Alliance**  
— ADVOCATING FOR A STRONGER  
MISSISSIPPI ECONOMY —

FOCUSED ON GROWTH

# Legislative Session Recap

The 2026 Legislative Session was an important milestone for the Mississippi Business Alliance and for the broader question facing our state: will Mississippi continue to advance policies that make it easier to work, invest, build, hire, and grow?

For MSBA, the answer does not come from party labels, slogans, or good intentions alone. It comes from the real-world impact of legislation on Mississippi employers, workers, families, and communities. A proposal may sound positive in concept, and many bills begin with worthy goals. But public policy must also be measured by what it does after it leaves the Capitol: how it affects costs, compliance, investment, workforce availability, insurance premiums, infrastructure, and long-term competitiveness.

That is why MSBA's work during the 2026 session centered on both outcomes and process. The best legislative results come when policymakers listen early, ask hard questions, involve affected employers, and are willing to adjust course when unintended consequences become clear.

## Leadership Matters

One of the clearest lessons from the 2026 session is that leadership matters. The business community depends on a legislative process that is organized, responsive, and serious about the details of public policy.

### Speaker Jason White

As Speaker of the House, Jason White has shown strong leadership on issues affecting Mississippi's economy, supporting business and jobs.



House leadership deserves particular recognition. Under the leadership of **Speaker Jason White**, the House continued to demonstrate the value of structure, preparation, and effective committee leadership. Legislative leadership is not only about which legislation reaches the floor. It begins much earlier – in committee appointments, in empowering chairmen to work complex issues, in creating space for

stakeholder input, and in encouraging legislators to pursue practical solutions.

That approach matters to Mississippi employers because the details of legislation often determine whether a proposal strengthens the economy or creates new barriers to growth. When elected officials are willing to bring stakeholders together, hear concerns, and work toward balanced solutions, Mississippi is more likely to get policy right.

### Governor Tate Reeves

Throughout his 22 years of public service, Governor Reeves has been a champion of economic development and pro-business policy with a singular focus on economic growth.



**Governor Tate Reeves** also deserves acknowledgement as the top elected official in the state. The final stamp of approval on all these pieces of legislation comes from him, and he has repeatedly shown his willingness to support pro-business issues and step in when unintended consequences arise.

## Health Care Costs and the Importance of Process

Few issues during the 2026 session better illustrated the importance of process than House Bill 1665.

MSBA supports meaningful PBM reform and recognized the need to address concerns in the prescription drug marketplace. The version of HB 1665 that passed the House reflected a serious effort to move that conversation forward. However, the Senate-amended version added dispensing fee language that raised significant concerns for employers and working Mississippians. MSBA's analysis found that the amended proposal would increase costs at the pharmacy counter and place additional financial pressure on employer-sponsored health plans and insurance premiums.

Continued

# Legislative Session Recap

This debate showed why health care policy must be handled carefully. Changes that appear targeted can have broad cost implications across the entire insurance market. Employers, employees, taxpayers, and families ultimately bear those costs.

**Senator Jeremy England** provided important leadership by sharing context with his colleagues about how the amended language would negatively affect everyday Mississippians. In the House, **Representative Hank Zuber** deserves recognition for his willingness to bring parties to the table and attempt to reach a fair and equitable compromise. Not every issue can be resolved in a single session, but legislators who engage seriously, listen to affected stakeholders, and seek balanced solutions help move Mississippi in the right direction.

## Workforce: Building Mississippi's Talent Pipeline

The 2026 session produced meaningful progress on one of Mississippi's most important long-term challenges: workforce. Employers across the state continue to identify workforce availability, skills, and participation as central barriers to growth.

Several measures advanced during the session reflected a stronger focus on employer-led training, career pathways, child care, education alignment, and postsecondary attainment. Legislation expanding and extending the income tax credit for employer-sponsored skills training, strengthening apprenticeship pathways, improving employer child care supports, creating the Upskill Mississippi Grant Program, and better coordinating postsecondary attainment efforts all point toward the same goal: preparing more Mississippians for work and helping employers meet current and future talent needs. **Representative Donnie Bell**, **Senator Daniel Sparks**, and **Senator Nicole Boyd** should all be commended for their time, effort and leadership on these integral pieces of legislation.

Education policy also plays an important role in economic competitiveness. Measures focused on math, literacy, computer science, financial literacy, and civics can strengthen the long-term workforce pipeline by improving the skills students bring into higher education, training programs, and the workplace.

No single bill solves Mississippi's workforce challenge. But taken together, these efforts represent an important step toward a more coordinated, employer-informed talent system – one that better connects education, training, and work.

## Competitiveness, Infrastructure, and Legal Climate

MSBA also supported efforts that improve the fundamentals of competitiveness. Businesses make decisions based on predictability. They need reliable roads and bridges, transparent rules, reasonable compliance expectations, modern workforce systems, and a legal and regulatory climate that rewards investment rather than discourages it.

Several bills were introduced to advance these goals. Measures related to highway funding, procurement reform, cybersecurity liability protections, agricultural inputs, and workforce development all affect whether Mississippi can compete for projects, capital, and jobs.

Infrastructure remains especially important. Mississippi's ability to move products, connect communities, and support industrial growth depends on continued investment in roads, bridges, ports, rail, and logistics systems. Policies that dedicate resources to transportation and infrastructure help strengthen the foundation on which private-sector growth is built.

Legal and regulatory certainty are also essential. Cybersecurity liability protections, for example, can encourage businesses and public entities to invest in stronger data protection practices while reducing unnecessary litigation risk for those that act responsibly. Similarly, procurement reforms can promote transparency, competition, and better use of public dollars when implemented carefully.

MSBA was encouraged to see the House advance practical measures in both of these areas. However, we were disappointed that cybersecurity liability protections and procurement reform ultimately failed to pass the Senate. These issues may not always attract the same public attention as larger economic development or tax proposals, but they matter to the day-to-day competitiveness of our state. Mississippi employers need a policy environment that encourages responsible investment, reduces legal uncertainty, and ensures taxpayer dollars are spent through clear, competitive, and accountable processes.

MSBA will continue to support thoughtful reforms that strengthen Mississippi's legal climate, modernize public-sector processes, and make our state a more predictable and competitive place to do business.

Continued

# Legislative Session Recap

## Good Intentions Can Still Create Real Costs

The 2026 session also reinforced a key principle of MSBA's advocacy: good intentions do not always produce good public policy.

Health benefit mandates are one example. Individual coverage requirements may be popular and may serve an important purpose. Considered in isolation, a single mandate can appear reasonable. But mandates do not exist in isolation. Each new requirement adds cost, and over time those costs are borne by employers, employees, taxpayers, and families through higher premiums and reduced flexibility.

The same principle applies to regulatory proposals that create new compliance obligations, reporting requirements, liability exposure, or enforcement mechanisms. A bill may seek to address a legitimate concern, but if it is drafted too broadly or without sufficient input from affected businesses, it can create uncertainty, increase costs, or make it harder for Mississippi companies to operate, innovate, and grow.

That is why MSBA believes lawmakers should engage employers early in the process. Mississippi businesses can provide real-world insight into how legislation will work after it leaves the Capitol, who will have to comply, what systems will be affected, what costs may be passed on to workers or customers, and whether the same goal can be achieved in a more practical and targeted way.

The right question is not simply whether a bill has a worthy purpose. The right question is whether the bill, as written, achieves that purpose in a practical way without creating unnecessary costs or consequences for Mississippi employers and workers.

## Balancing Purpose With Practicality

That balance — supporting the purpose while considering the implications — is central to MSBA's work at the Capitol. Mississippi cannot afford to evaluate legislation only by its title. The state must ask what a bill actually does, who pays for it, who must comply with it, whether it improves competitiveness, and whether the same goal can be achieved in a more practical way.

This approach is especially important because Mississippi is competing every day with other states for jobs, investment, talent, supply chains, and economic opportunity. Other states are constantly working to improve their business climates. Mississippi must do the same.

A pro-growth agenda does not mean opposing every regulation, mandate, or new program. It means asking whether policies are designed well, whether they solve real problems, whether they support growth, and whether they avoid unnecessary burdens on the people and businesses expected to carry them out.

## Accountability Through the Legislative Report Card

The 2026 Legislative Report and legislator report card are built around that standard.

MSBA recognizes lawmakers who supported pro-growth policies, listened to employers, worked through difficult issues in good faith, and helped protect Mississippi's ability to compete. The report card reflects both recorded votes and broader engagement on business and jobs issues, including whether legislators demonstrated openness, consistency, and support for policies that promote growth, investment, and opportunity.

This report is an accountability tool based on alignment with MSBA's priorities and the real-world concerns of employers across Mississippi.

## Looking Ahead

The 2026 session produced important wins, difficult debates, and clear reminders that effective leadership and thoughtful policymaking matter. Mississippi made progress on workforce, infrastructure, and competitiveness. At the same time, the session showed why MSBA must remain engaged when well-intentioned proposals risk increasing costs, creating uncertainty, or making it harder to do business in our state.

MSBA will continue working with elected officials who are committed to practical, pro-growth solutions. Our goal is not simply to support or oppose bills. Our goal is to help Mississippi get policy right — for employers, for workers, and for every community that depends on a strong and growing economy.

## Why You Need to Join MSBA

*If you are not currently a member of MSBA, we would love to share more about how we support business leaders like you and how you can get involved!*

*Speak with our membership team at 601.948.1222*

# MISSISSIPPI'S WORKFORCE WINS

*Building the talent pipeline from classroom skills to career-ready workers.*

1



**SB 3228**

## Employer-Led Training

- **50%** income tax credit for employer-sponsored skills training
- **\$2.5M** statewide annual cap
- Up to **\$2,500** per employee, per year
- Extended through Dec. 31, **2030**

4



**HB 562**

## Upskill Mississippi

- Last-dollar tuition and fees for eligible community college programs
- **\$500** annual book/material stipend
- Pilot begins Spring **2027**
- Full implementation in **2028–2029**

2



**SB 2867**

## Child Care Supports Work

- **50%** employer tax credit for dependent care or child care stipends
- Up to **\$3,000** per child, per year
- **\$1M** annual statewide cap

5



**SB 2294**

## Classroom to Career

- K–12 math coaching
- K–5 math screening
- Grades 4–8 reading interventions
- Financial literacy in Grades 6–8
- Personal finance required for Class of **2032**
- Computer science or CTE-CS credit for entering 9th grade class of **2029–2030**

3



**HB 1696**

## Apprenticeship Pathways

- Creates Mississippi Office of Apprenticeship
- Up to **50%** wage reimbursement for on-the-job training
- Employer and employee advisory council

6



**SB 2524**

## Workforce Alignment

- Creates Mississippi Postsecondary Attainment Council
- **26** voting members + **6** ex officio members
- Annual public report and dashboard beginning in **2027**
- Connects education, workforce, and business leaders

## A PRO-GROWTH WORKFORCE AGENDA

*Train. Support. Upskill. Align. Prepare.*



**Mississippi Business Alliance**  
ADVOCATING FOR A STRONGER MISSISSIPPI ECONOMY



# Mississippi State Senate

## Legislative Report Card

Grade	Office Holder	District	Party
A	Brice Wiggins	52	R
A	Chad McMahan	6	R
A	J. Walter Michel	25	R
A	Jeremy England	51	R
A	Josh Harkins	20	R
A	Mike Thompson	48	R
B	Andy Berry	35	R
B	Bart Williams	15	R
B	Charles Younger	17	R
B	Chris Johnson	44	R
B	Daniel Sparks	5	R
B	Dean Kirby	30	R
B	Joel Carter	49	R
B	Kevin Blackwell	19	R
B	Lane Taylor	18	R
B	Neil Whaley	10	R
B	Nicole Boyd	9	R
B	Rod Hickman	32	D
B	Scott DeLano	50	R
B	Sollie Norwood	28	D
B	W. Briggs Hopson	23	R
C	Angela Burks Hill	40	R
C	Benjamin Suber	8	R
C	Bradford Blackmon	21	D
C	Brian Rhodes	36	R
C	David Blount	29	D

Grade	Office Holder	District	Party
C	Dennis DeBar	43	R
C	Don Hartness	42	R
C	Hillman Frazier	27	D
C	Hob Bryan	7	D
C	Jason Barrett	39	R
C	Jeff Tate	33	R
C	Joey Fillingane	41	R
C	Kamesha Mumford	26	D
C	Lydia Graves Chassaniol	14	R
C	Michael McLendon	1	R
C	Mike Seymour	47	R
C	Phil Ladner	46	R
C	Sarita Simmons	13	D
C	Tyler McCaughn	31	R
D	Albert Butler	37	D
D	Angela Turner Ford	16	D
D	Gary Brumfield	38	D
D	Johnny DuPree	45	D
D	Joseph Thomas	22	D
D	Justin Pope	24	D
D	Kathy Chism	3	R
D	Rita Potts Parks	4	R
F	Derrick Simmons	12	D
F	Reginald Jackson	11	D
F	Theresa Gillespie-Isom	2	D

### HOW TO READ THIS REPORT CARD



This report card grades legislators on their support of pro-business legislation considered during the 2026 Legislative Session.



Votes are weighted based on the impact of each bill on Mississippi's business climate.



Higher grades reflect stronger support for free enterprise, job creation, and economic growth across the state.

### GRADE KEY



Exceptional Business Support



Strong Business Support



Average Business Support



Below Average Business Support



Failing Business Support

Visit [msba.com/2026session](https://msba.com/2026session) for the digital version and detailed bill descriptions



The Mississippi Business Alliance advocates for policies that strengthen our economy, create jobs, and improve opportunity for all Mississippians.

# Mississippi State House of Representatives

## Legislative Report Card

Grade	Office Holder	District	Party
A	Andy Boyd	37	R
A	Beth Luther Waldo	15	R
A	Bill Pigott	99	R
A	Brad Mattox	2	R
A	Brent Anderson	122	R
A	Brent Powell	59	R
A	C. Scott Bounds	44	R
A	Casey Eure	116	R
A	Clay Deweese	12	R
A	Clay Mansell	56	R
A	Donnie Bell	21	R
A	Elliot Burch	105	R
A	Hank Zuber	113	R
A	Jason White	48	R
A	Jim Estrada	33	R
A	Jimmy Fondren	111	R
A	Jody Steverson	4	R
A	Joey Hood	35	R
A	Jonathan McMillan	58	R
A	Joseph Tubb	87	R
A	Josh Hawkins	10	R
A	Karl Oliver	46	R
A	Kent McCarty	101	R
A	Kevin Felsher	117	R
A	Kevin Ford	54	R
A	Kevin Horan	34	R
A	Lee Yancey	74	R
A	Lester Carpenter	1	R
A	Manly Barton	109	R
A	Missy McGee	102	R
A	Rob Roberson	43	R
A	Rodney Hall	20	R
A	Sam Mims	97	R
A	Samuel Creekmore	14	R
A	Shane Aguirre	17	R
A	Shane Barnett	86	R
A	Steve Lott	107	R
A	Steve Massengill	13	R
A	Trey Lamar	8	R
B	Angela Cockerham	96	I

Grade	Office Holder	District	Party
B	Bill Kinkade	52	R
B	Billy Adam Calvert	83	R
B	Cedric Burnett	9	D
B	Celeste Hurst	75	R
B	Dan Eubanks	25	R
B	Dana McLean	39	R
B	Donnie Scoggin	89	R
B	Fred Shanks	60	R
B	Gene Newman	61	R
B	Jansen Owen	106	R
B	Jay McKnight	95	R
B	Jeff Guice	114	R
B	Jeff Hale	24	R
B	Jerry Turner	18	R
B	John Read	112	R
B	Justin Keen	6	R
B	Ken Morgan	100	R
B	Lance Varner	62	R
B	Larry Byrd	104	R
B	Mark Tullos	79	R
B	Noah Sanford	90	R
B	Perry Bailey	23	R
B	Randy Rushing	78	R
B	Shanda Yates	64	I
B	Steve Horne	81	R
B	Tracy Arnold	3	R
B	Troy Smith	84	R
B	Vince Mangold	53	R
B	W.I. "Doc" Harris	28	R
B	Zachary Grady	115	R
C	Becky Currie	92	R
C	Carl Mickens	42	D
C	Carolyn Crawford	121	R
C	Charles Blackwell	88	R
C	Daryl Porter	98	D
C	Grace Butler-Washington	69	D
C	Greg Haney	118	R
C	Jill Ford	73	R
C	Justis Gibbs	72	D
C	Karl Gibbs	36	D

Grade	Office Holder	District	Party
C	Keith Jackson	45	D
C	Kimberly Remak	7	R
C	Randy Boyd	19	R
C	Richard Bennett	120	R
C	Ronnie Crudup	71	D
C	Solomon Osborne	32	D
C	Timmy Ladner	93	R
C	Tracey Rosebud	30	D
D	Bryant Clark	47	D
D	Cheikh Taylor	38	D
D	Chris Bell	65	D
D	Earle Banks	67	D
D	Fabian Nelson	66	D
D	Gregory Elliott	82	D
D	Gregory Holloway	76	D
D	Hester Jackson McCray	40	D
D	Jeffery Harness	85	D
D	Jeffrey Hulum	119	D
D	Jeramey Anderson	110	D
D	John Faulkner	5	D
D	John Hines	50	D
D	Justin Crosby	22	D
D	Kabir Karriem	41	D
D	Kenji Holloway	27	D
D	Lataisha Jackson	11	D
D	Lawrence Blackmon	57	D
D	Omeria Scott	80	D
D	Oscar Denton	55	D
D	Otha Williams	26	D
D	Otis Anthony	31	D
D	Percy Watson	103	D
D	Rickey Thompson	16	D
D	Robert Johnson	94	D
D	Robert Sanders	29	D
D	Stacey Hobgood-Wilkes	108	R
D	Stephanie Foster	63	D
D	Timaka James-Jones	51	D
F	Bob Evans	91	D
F	Willie Bailey	49	D
F	Zakiya Summers	68	D

# ≡ THE COST STACK ≡ ON MAIN STREET

Every new cost layer leaves employers with less room to hire, invest, and raise wages.



## 1. HEALTH PREMIUMS

**\$22,271**

Average Mississippi employer family premium, 2024



## 2. PROPERTY INSURANCE

**TOP 10**

Mississippi among highest-cost states



## 3. LAWSUIT COSTS

**\$2,843**

Estimated annual lawsuit cost per household



## 4. REGULATIONS

**125,604**

State regulatory restrictions



## 5. LICENSING

**164**

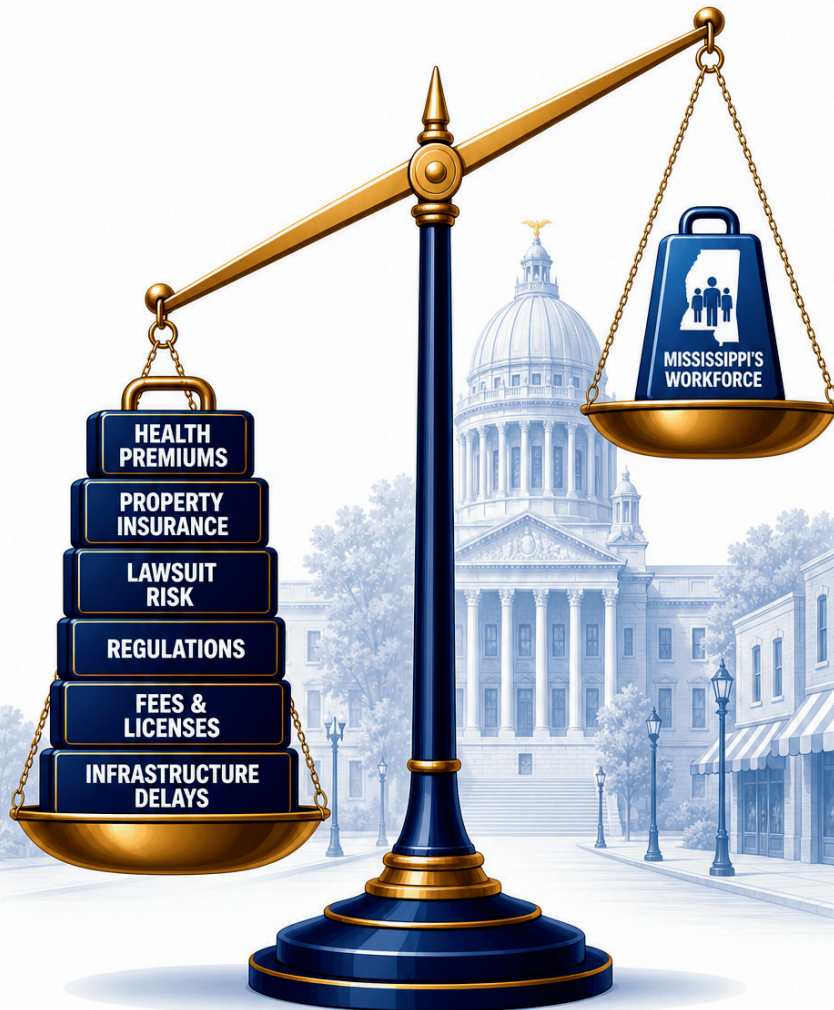
Licensed occupations



## 6. INFRASTRUCTURE

**C-**

Roads grade plus annual funding gap pressure



## IMPACT ON BUSINESS & JOBS

- Higher operating costs
- Less room for wages
- Slower hiring
- Greater taxpayer pressure



Mississippi  
Business Alliance

— ◆ —

**BUSINESS.  
FORWARD.**

*Inaugural Gala*

— ◆ —



**OCTOBER 15**

📍 SHERATON FLOWOOD • FLOWOOD, MISSISSIPPI

*Reception: 5:30pm - 6:30pm • Program: 6:30pm - 8:30pm*

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**



**Jonathan Martin**

Politics Bureau Chief and Senior  
Political Columnist at POLITICO

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION**



**Gov. Haley Barbour**

Former Mississippi Governor

# Mississippi Business Alliance

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