



# CAPITOL

comments

*The Voice of Agriculture®*

January 6, 2012

Week 1

## This Week at the Capitol

The 2012 Regular Session started at noon on Tuesday, January 3, with the election of Phillip Gunn of Clinton as Speaker of the House. Greg Snowden of Meridian was elected Speaker Pro Tem. Terry Brown of Columbus was elected President Pro Tem of the Senate. This is the first time since reconstruction that Republicans have controlled the House, Senate and Governor's Office. Republicans hold all the statewide elected offices except for Attorney General, which is held by Jim Hood.

On Thursday, January 5, seven statewide elected officials, including Lt. Governor Reeves, were sworn into office by Chief Justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court William Waller, Jr. The governor's inauguration will take place on January 10, and Governor Bryant will officially be sworn into office.

The Senate announced committee chairs, vice chairs, and members on Friday, and the House is expected to announce committees within the next two weeks.

### Senate Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs

**Agriculture Committee:** Chair, Sen. Billy Hudson (Forrest Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Russell Jolly (Chickasaw Co.)

**Forestry Committee:** Chair, Sen. Melanie Sojourner (Adams Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Giles Ward (Winston Co.)

**Appropriations Committee:** Chair, Sen. Buck Clarke (Washington Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Terry Burton (Newton Co.)

**Finance Committee:** Chair, Sen. Joey Fillingane (Lamar Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Merle Flowers (Desoto Co.)

**Energy Committee** (new committee formed of Oil and Gas and Public Utilities): Chair, Sen. Merle Flowers (Desoto Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Giles Ward (Winston Co.)

**Highways and Transportation Committee:** Chair, Sen. Willie Simmons (Bolivar Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Perry Lee (Simpson Co.)

**Education Committee:** Chair, Sen. Gray Tollison (Lafayette Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Nancy Collins (Lee Co.)

**Legislative Reapportionment and Congressional Redistricting Committee:** Chair, Sen. Merle Flowers (Desoto Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Chris McDaniel (Jones Co.)

## 2012 MFBF *Legislative Priorities*

*Production Agriculture—Much of Mississippi's economy is derived from farming or farm-related activities. Agriculture is Mississippi's largest industry worth \$6.9 billion dollars a year. In addition, agriculture makes up 29% of the workforce in Mississippi.*

*Taxation—The taxes farmers pay should be used to aid the citizens of Mississippi, but taxation must not be allowed to increase to a point that economic development is hindered.*

*Environment—In order to further conservation efforts in agriculture, attention should be focused toward economic approaches to land management.*

*Energy—The depletion of fossil fuels and the increasing energy prices have caused an emphasis to be placed on renewable fuels. Farmers have the resources through general farm practices to generate energy.*

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**Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks:** Chair, Sen. Giles Ward (Winston Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Angela Hill (Pearl River Co.)

**Judiciary A Committee:** Chair, Sen. Briggs Hopson (Warren Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Bennie Turner (Clay Co.)

**Judiciary B Committee:** Chair, Sen. Hob Bryan (Monroe Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Chris McDaniel (Jones Co.)

**Environmental Protection, Conservation & Water Resources Committee:** Chair, Sen. Tommy Gollott (Harrison Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Debbie Dawkins (Harrison Co.)

**County Affairs Committee:** Chair, Sen. Nickey Browning (Pontotoc Co.); Vice Chair, Sen. Billy Hudson (Forrest Co.)

**Insurance Committee:** Chair, Sen. Videt Carmichael (Lauderdale Co.); Vice Chair, Sen Rita Parks (Alcorn Co.)

### Bills of Interest

No legislation has been made public for either the House or the Senate.

*Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation  
Cordially Invites you to the  
Legislative Reception  
January 23, 2012, at 6:00 p.m.  
Mississippi Farmer's Market  
929 High Street  
Jackson, MS*

### PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES BY EMAIL

To receive policy updates and newsletters by email, please log on to [www.msfb.org](http://www.msfb.org) and click on the "ag news" by email link to enter your email information. Be sure to select Public Policy as well as other subjects of interest to you from the menu, or call Tammy Meyer at 601.977.4226 and request to be added to the email list.

## 2012 Legislative Calendar

**January 23-24** — Winter Commodity Conference

**January 23** — Legislative Reception

**March 1** — Ag Day at the Capitol

**March 6** — Women's Day at Capitol

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