

Pursuant to Mississippi Code Annotated Section 25-61-19, the following legislation from the 2020 Regular Legislative Session affects the powers and duties of the Office of the Attorney General:

1. H.B. 1104: Occupational Licensing Review Commission; authorize to review certain existing occupational regulations to determine compliance with state policy

H.B. 1104 authorizes the Occupational Licensing Review Commission (“OLRC”) to review the substance of an existing regulation promulgated by an occupational licensing board for compliance with the “state policy.” If the existing regulation is not consistent with state policy, the OLRC is empowered to declare the non-complying regulation to be invalid, sixty days after which time, the regulation would have no legal effect, or allow the licensing board to amend the non-complying regulation to conform to state policy. The OLRC is composed of the Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General.

2. H.B. 1295 The “Life Equality Act”; create to prohibit abortion based on certain factors

H.B. 1295 prohibits abortions being performed because of the child’s race, sex, or genetic abnormality, except in a medical emergency. The bill authorizes the Attorney General to bring an action on behalf of the Mississippi State Department of Health or the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure to enforce the provision of the Act.

3. H.B. 1559: Human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation; provide services for victims through approved services

H.B. 1559 authorizes the Office of the Attorney General to establish a program to fund victim service providers that offer shelter, counseling, medical needs, transitional housing, and other related services to victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. This bill creates the “Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund,” administered by the Office of the Attorney General, to fund and assist human trafficking shelters, commercial sexual exploitation shelters, and victim service providers. The bill also authorizes the Office of the Attorney General to promulgate regulations to carry about the bill’s provisions.

4. S.B. 2595 Governmental entities; may not prohibit wearing of traditional regalia or objects of cultural significance at public events

S.B. 2595 provides that a governmental entity may not prohibit an individual from wearing traditional tribal regalia or objects of cultural significance at a public event.

5. S.B. 2596 Alcoholic beverages; revise penalties for sale to minors

S.B. 2596 revises the regulation of “alternative nicotine products” and requires the Office of the Attorney General to conduct random, unannounced inspections at locations where alternative nicotine products are sold or distributed to ensure compliance with the Mississippi Juvenile Tobacco Access Prevention Act of 1997.

6. S.B. 2725 Hemp; create the Mississippi Hemp Cultivation Act

S.B. 2725 authorizes the cultivation, processing, and transportation of hemp pursuant to a State Plan, and it empowers the Mississippi Attorney General to enforce this law.

7. S.B. 3052: Driver's licenses; credit time of inability to apply due to COVID-19 closures toward period for holding prerequisite permit

S.B. 3052 authorizes the Commissioner of Insurance—in place of the Attorney General—to administer the Mississippi First Responders Health and Safety Act and to promulgate regulations to carry out such duties.