



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Foreign Purchase of Farmland Study Committee Holds First Meeting

JACKSON, Miss. – The Study Committee on Foreign Purchase of Farmland in Mississippi held its first meeting today at the State Capitol. The Mississippi Legislature created this Study Committee through House Bill 280, 2023 Legislative Session, for the purpose of studying the purchasing, acquiring, leasing or holding an interest in agricultural land by foreign governments.

“Food security is national security. America is strong because of our food, fiber, and shelter production capabilities we must protect our farmland against adversarial foreign interest,” said Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson. “We have found that some 757,000 acres, over two percent of Mississippi’s agricultural land is controlled by foreign interests. As the Study Committee further explores the issue of foreign purchases of farmland, we will consider a number of factors including national security, food security, landowners’ property rights and international trade. The Study Committee looks forward to submitting a report of findings to the Legislature by December 1.”

The Study Committee is composed of the following nine members: Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson; Whitney Lipscomb, Designee of the Attorney General; Representative Angela Cockerham, Chairman of House Judiciary A Committee; Senator Brice Wiggins, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary A Committee; Bill Pigott, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee; Senator Chuck Younger, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee; David Bradley Hall, Appointee of the Governor; Meredith Allen, Appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and Ted Kendall, IV, Appointee of the Speaker of the House.

At its first meeting, the Study Committee elected Commissioner Andy Gipson as Chairman, Representative Bill Pigott as Vice Chairman and Representative Angela Cockerham as Secretary. The Study Committee also approved its procedures and future meeting dates with further details to be announced later.

Visit www.mdac.ms.gov/farmland for more information about the Study Committee including meeting proceedings and USDA foreign ownership information. Public comments are welcome via email and can be submitted at farmland@mdac.ms.gov through November 9, 2023.

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Photo attached.



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