



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

ANDY GIPSON
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Mississippi Agriculture, Forestry & Seafood Takes Voice to Washington

JACKSON, Miss. – This week, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson led a delegation representing Mississippi farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, shrimpers and fishermen to Washington, D.C., to meet with high-level federal officials.

The 21-person delegation met with key decision makers from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Secretary Brooke Rollins, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Office of Food Safety, and Office of Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, as well as officials from the U.S. Department of Interior, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Small Business Administration and the White House.

"Roundtable discussions started with a very special moment when Dr. Alveda King, niece of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., led us in an opening prayer and song," said Commissioner Gipson. "Our delegation had in-depth policy discussions with key decision-makers sharing concerns and issues impacting Mississippi farms and the broader agricultural industry."

Several of the major issues discussed included curbing the dumping of foreign imported catfish, shrimp and other foods; blocking EUDR's application in America; expanding our agricultural workforce; coordinating more uniform disaster relief and recovery; and standing up more local food and value-added processing to make farming profitable again. The roundtable meetings also provided members of the delegation the opportunity to share which policies and programs implemented by the current Administration have been beneficial to Mississippi farmers and landowners.

"Resolving these issues would be a game changer for our farmers and landowners. Our farmers are not asking for handouts. They are asking for a level playing field so they can be competitive in the market," continued Gipson. "One of my key takeaways is the genuine interest from the Trump Administration in what is going on in Mississippi and how they can help our farmers. I appreciate President Trump's and Secretary Rollins' focus on putting our Farmers First."

"We appreciate the USDA Office of Public and Private Partnerships for hosting our Mississippi Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood Delegation. We will continue having conversations and building relationships so we can make sure Mississippi's voice is heard at the highest federal levels. Our next step is to prepare a written briefing on the major policy issues that will be shared directly with White House decision-makers. I look forward to updating the people of our great state on the progress made from these discussions."

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Photo attached.



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