

By: Representatives Zuber, Ford (73rd)

To: State Affairs;  
Technology

HOUSE BILL NO. 1491  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A CLOUD CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (CCOE)  
2 WITHIN THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
3 SERVICES; TO FACILITATE THE ADOPTION AND MANAGEMENT OF CLOUD  
4 COMPUTING ACROSS STATE AGENCIES AND GOVERNING AUTHORITIES; TO  
5 PROVIDE STRATEGIC GUIDANCE, BEST PRACTICES, AND GOVERNANCE  
6 FRAMEWORKS FOR CLOUD MIGRATION AND OPTIMIZATION; TO ENHANCE  
7 SECURITY, SCALABILITY, AND COST EFFICIENCY IN STATEWIDE CLOUD  
8 OPERATIONS; TO AUTHORIZE THE PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CCOE  
9 OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD; TO PROVIDE REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT  
10 REQUIREMENTS; TO AUTHORIZE THE PROMULGATION OF RULES AND  
11 REGULATIONS NECESSARY FOR ITS ADMINISTRATION; TO AMEND SECTION  
12 25-53-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CONFORM DEFINITIONS; TO  
13 ESTABLISH THE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION FUND; AND FOR RELATED  
14 PURPOSES.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

16 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
17 "Cloud Center of Excellence Act."

18 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms shall  
19 have the meanings ascribed herein, unless the context clearly  
20 requires otherwise:

21 (a) "Cloud Center of Excellence" or "CCOE" means the  
22 centralized body responsible for providing strategic guidance,  
23 best practices, governance, and technical support for cloud



24 adoption and management across state agencies and governing  
25 authorities.

26 (b) "Cloud computing" means on-demand access to  
27 computing resources, including storage, servers, and applications,  
28 delivered via the Internet or other networks.

29 (c) "ITS" or "department" means the Mississippi  
30 Department of Information Technology Services.

31 (d) "Governing authority" means the same as the term  
32 governing authority is defined in Section 25-53-3(2)(f).

33 (e) "State agency" means the same as the term "agency"  
34 is defined in Section 25-53-3(2)(e).

35 **SECTION 3.** (1) There is established within the Mississippi  
36 Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) a centralized  
37 Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE) to facilitate cloud adoption  
38 across state agencies and governing authorities, enhance  
39 technological infrastructure, improve security and scalability,  
40 and streamline cloud migrations in a cost-effective and efficient  
41 manner.

42 (2) Using existing resources, ITS may review the process for  
43 the coordinated development, hosting and management of computer  
44 software for state agencies that use cloud computing services.  
45 The Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE) shall:

46 (a) Develop and implement a statewide strategy for  
47 cloud adoption and management;



48 (b) Provide guidance, best practices, and governance  
49 frameworks to state agencies and governing authorities for the  
50 adoption and use of cloud services;

51 (c) Establish standardized processes for cloud  
52 migrations, resource optimization, and workload assessments;

53 (d) Enhance cybersecurity protocols and ensure  
54 compliance with state and federal security standards;

55 (e) Monitor and report on the scalability, cost  
56 efficiency, and performance of cloud infrastructure;

57 (f) Offer training and support to agency personnel to  
58 promote cloud literacy and effective utilization; and

59 (g) Coordinate with state agencies and governing  
60 authorities to ensure a phased implementation schedule as required  
61 by the provision of Section 4 of this act.

62 **SECTION 4.** (1) The Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE) shall  
63 establish a two-year phased implementation plan, which shall  
64 accomplish the following benchmarks by July 1, 2027:

65 (a) Conduct statewide readiness assessments and develop  
66 detailed cloud migration plans for pilot agencies;

67 (b) Initiate pilot migrations for selected state  
68 agencies, establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and refine  
69 processes based on feedback;

70 (c) Expand cloud adoption to additional state agencies,  
71 focusing on optimizing resource utilization and ensuring adherence  
72 to best practices;



73 (d) Integrate governing authorities into the cloud  
74 ecosystem and provide support for local governments, postsecondary  
75 educational institutions and school districts; and

76 (e) Achieve full statewide adoption of cloud services,  
77 with ongoing monitoring, training, and optimization provided by  
78 the CCOE for all state agencies and governing authorities.

79 (2) During the implementation described in subsection (1),  
80 each state agency and governing authority integrated into the CCOE  
81 at that time shall consider:

82 (a) Cloud computing service options, including any  
83 security benefits and cost savings associated with purchasing  
84 those service options from a cloud computing service provider and  
85 from a statewide technology center established by the department,  
86 when making purchases; and

87 (b) Cloud computing service options and compatibility  
88 with cloud computing services in the development of new  
89 information technology software applications.

90 (3) (a) Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this  
91 subsection, a state agency or governing authority shall ensure,  
92 when making purchases for an automated information system, that  
93 the system is capable of being deployed and run on cloud computing  
94 services.

95 (b) When making a purchase for an automated information  
96 system, a state agency or governing authority may determine that,  
97 due to integration limitations with legacy systems, security risks



98 or costs, the state agency or governing authority is unable to  
99 purchase a system capable of being deployed and run on cloud  
100 computing services.

101 (c) At least fourteen (14) days before the date a state  
102 agency or governing authority solicits bids, proposals, offers or  
103 other applicable expressions of interest for a purchase described  
104 by paragraph (b) of this subsection, the state agency or governing  
105 authority shall submit a report that describes the purchase and  
106 the agency's reasoning for making the purchase of an automated  
107 information system to the Mississippi Department of Information  
108 Technology Services (ITS).

109 (4) The department shall provide administrative support and  
110 oversight to the CCOE and ensure compliance with this act.

111 (5) The department is authorized to:

112 (a) Enter into agreements with cloud service providers  
113 to facilitate cost-effective procurement of cloud solutions;

114 (b) Develop and enforce statewide cloud security and  
115 compliance standards;

116 (c) Establish funding mechanisms, including interagency  
117 agreements, to support the operations of the CCOE; and

118 (d) Promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry  
119 out the provisions of this act.

120 **SECTION 5.** (1) Not later than November 15 of each  
121 even-numbered year, ITS, using existing resources, shall submit a  
122 report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker, the



123 Chairpersons of the House and Senate Committees on Technology and  
124 of the House State Affairs Committee on the use of cloud computing  
125 service options by state agencies and governing authorities,  
126 detailing the progress of the implementation plan, challenges  
127 encountered, and recommendations for improvement. The report must  
128 include use cases that provided cost savings and other benefits,  
129 including security enhancements. All state agencies and governing  
130 authorities shall cooperate with ITS in the creation of the report  
131 by providing timely and accurate information and any assistance  
132 required by the department.

133 **SECTION 6.** The Legislature shall appropriate funds to the  
134 Department of Information Technology Services to implement and  
135 operate the Cloud Center of Excellence (CCOE). The CCOE may seek  
136 additional funding through federal grants, partnerships, and other  
137 available resources.

138 **SECTION 7.** Section 25-53-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
139 amended as follows:

140 25-53-3. (1) Whenever the term "Central Data Processing  
141 Authority" or the term "authority," when referring to the Central  
142 Data Processing Authority, is used in any law, rule, regulation,  
143 document or elsewhere, it shall be construed to mean the  
144 Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services.

145 (2) For the purposes of this chapter the following terms  
146 shall have the meanings ascribed in this section unless the  
147 context otherwise requires:



148 (a) "Central Data Processing Authority" and "CDPA" mean  
149 "Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services \* \* \*  
150 (ITS)" and the term "authority" means "board of the \* \* \* ITS."

151 (b) "Bureau of Systems Policy and Planning," "Bureau of  
152 Telecommunications," "Bureau of Central Data Processing" and  
153 "bureau" mean " \* \* \* ITS."

154 \* \* \*

155 ( \* \* \* c) "Acquisition" of \* \* \* information technology  
156 means the purchase, lease, rental, or acquisition in any other  
157 manner of any such \* \* \* information technology.

158 ( \* \* \* d) "Agency" means and includes all the various  
159 state agencies, officers, departments, boards, commissions,  
160 offices and institutions of the state.

161 ( \* \* \* e) "Governing authority" means boards of  
162 supervisors, governing boards of all school districts, all boards  
163 of directors of public water supply districts, boards of directors  
164 of master public water supply districts, municipal public utility  
165 commissions, governing authorities of all municipalities, port  
166 authorities, commissioners and boards of trustees of any public  
167 hospitals and any \* \* \* governing authority of the state supported  
168 wholly or in part by public funds of the state or \* \* \* governing  
169 authority thereof.

170 ( \* \* \* f) "Bid" means any of the valid source selection  
171 techniques and competitive procurement methods appropriate to  
172 information technology procurement in the public sector,



173 including, but not limited to, competitive sealed bidding,  
174 competitive sealed proposals, simplified small purchase  
175 procedures, sole source procurements, and emergency procurements.

176 ( \* \* \*g) "Telecommunications transmission facility"  
177 means any transmission medium, switch, instrument, inside wiring  
178 system or other facility which is used, in whole or part, to  
179 provide any transmission.

180 ( \* \* \*h) "Equipment support contract" means a contract  
181 which covers a single, specific class or classes of  
182 telecommunications equipment or service and all features  
183 associated with that class, through which state agencies may  
184 purchase or lease the item of equipment or service specified by  
185 issuing a purchase order under the terms of the contract without  
186 the necessity of further competitive bidding.

187 ( \* \* \*i) "Inside wiring system" means any wiring  
188 which:

189 (i) Directly or indirectly, interconnects any  
190 terminal equipment with any other terminal equipment or with any  
191 regulated facility or common carrier services; and

192 (ii) Is located at the premises of the customer  
193 and is not inside any terminal equipment.

194 ( \* \* \*j) "Procurement" means the selling, buying,  
195 purchasing, renting, leasing or otherwise obtaining \* \* \*  
196 information technology as well as activities engaged in, resulting



197 in or expected to result in selling, buying, purchasing, renting,  
198 leasing or otherwise obtaining \* \* \* information technology.

199 ( \* \* \* k) "Telecommunications equipment, systems,  
200 related services" are limited to the equipment and means to  
201 provide:

202 (i) Telecommunications transmission facilities.

203 (ii) Telephone systems, including voice processing  
204 systems.

205 (iii) Facsimile systems.

206 (iv) Radio paging services.

207 (v) Mobile telephone services, including cellular  
208 mobile telephone service.

209 (vi) Intercom and paging systems.

210 (vii) Video teleconferencing systems.

211 (viii) Personal communications networks and  
212 services.

213 (ix) Any and all systems based on emerging and  
214 future telecommunications technologies relative to (i) through  
215 (viii) above.

216 ( \* \* \* l) "Telecommunications system lease contract"  
217 means a contract between a supplier of telecommunications systems,  
218 including equipment and related services, and the Mississippi  
219 Department of Information Technology Services \* \* \*.

220 ( \* \* \* m) "Tariffed or regulated service" means  
221 telecommunications service offered by common carriers and subject



222 to control by the Mississippi Public Service Commission or the  
223 Federal Communications Commission.

224 ( \* \* \* n) "State Data Center" means one or more  
225 facilities operated by \* \* \* ITS to provide information technology  
226 resources requiring enterprise computing resources or any  
227 other \* \* \* ITS managed information resources.

228 (o) "Information technology" means any technology as  
229 defined by ITS, including, but not limited to, computer and/or  
230 telecommunications equipment, systems or related services.

231 **SECTION 8.** (1) The purpose of this act is to establish a  
232 Technology Innovation Fund, hereafter referred to as "Fund," to  
233 facilitate the development and deployment of innovative  
234 technological solutions that enhance the efficiency, transparency  
235 and responsiveness of government services. The fund is intended  
236 to support collaborative efforts between government agencies,  
237 educational institutions, private sector partners and nonprofit  
238 organizations in the implementation of digital solutions that  
239 drive public sector modernization.

240 (2) (a) There is hereby established the Technology  
241 Innovation Fund, which shall be administered by the Mississippi  
242 Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) under the  
243 authority of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the State of  
244 Mississippi.

245 (b) The fund shall provide financial support for  
246 projects that utilize technology to address critical needs,



247 improve service delivery, and foster collaboration between public  
248 and private entities.

249 (3) The objectives of the fund shall include, but are not  
250 limited to, the following:

251 (a) Promote the development of digital solutions that  
252 improve government service delivery and operational efficiency;

253 (b) Foster cross-agency and intergovernmental  
254 collaboration in the adoption of shared technologies and best  
255 practices;

256 (c) Encourage public-private partnerships in the  
257 development and deployment of innovative technologies;

258 (d) Facilitate research, prototyping, and piloting of  
259 emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain,  
260 data analytics, and cloud computing;

261 (e) Ensure equitable access to technological  
262 innovations that can benefit underserved communities and regions;  
263 and

264 (f) Enhance cybersecurity and protect the integrity of  
265 state digital infrastructure.

266 (4) (a) The following entities shall be eligible to apply  
267 for funding under this act:

268 (i) State and local government agencies;

269 (ii) Public and private educational institutions;

270 (iii) Nonprofit organizations engaged in

271 technology-driven public service initiatives; and



272 (iv) Private sector entities, in partnership with  
273 public sector agencies, for collaborative projects.

274 (b) Applications for funding must demonstrate how the  
275 proposed project will contribute to the digital transformation of  
276 government services and the achievement of the objectives outlined  
277 in Section 3 of this act.

278 (5) (a) The CIO of the Mississippi Department of  
279 Information Technology Services shall establish criteria for the  
280 evaluation of proposals and the allocation of funds, prioritizing  
281 projects that:

282 (i) Provide measurable benefits to the public and  
283 improve government operations;

284 (ii) Demonstrate potential for scalability and  
285 sustainability;

286 (iii) Foster partnerships across government,  
287 private, and nonprofit sectors; and

288 (iv) Address urgent challenges in service  
289 delivery, efficiency, and cybersecurity.

290 (b) The fund may allocate grants, matching funds, or  
291 loans to eligible projects, as deemed appropriate by the CIO.

292 (6) (a) Each recipient of funding from the Technology  
293 Innovation Fund shall be required to provide periodic reports to  
294 the CIO detailing the progress, outcomes, and financial  
295 expenditures associated with the funded project.



296 (b) The CIO shall submit an annual report to the  
297 Governor and Legislature detailing the use of the Technology  
298 Innovation Fund, including descriptions of funded projects, their  
299 outcomes, and recommendations for future innovations.

300 (7) (a) The fund shall be initially capitalized with an  
301 appropriation of monies from the General Fund, with additional  
302 funding to be secured from:

303 (i) Public-private partnerships;

304 (ii) Federal grants or matching programs;

305 (iii) Revenues from technological licensing or  
306 commercialization resulting from funded projects; and

307 (iv) Donations or contributions from private or  
308 philanthropic organizations.

309 (b) The fund may also establish a revolving loan  
310 mechanism to replenish available resources through repayments from  
311 successful projects.

312 (8) The CIO of the Mississippi Department of Information  
313 Technology Services (ITS) is authorized to promulgate any rules  
314 and regulations necessary for the implementation and  
315 administration of this act.

316 **SECTION 9.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
317 and after July 1, 2025.

