



PRESS RELEASE

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SATURDAY'S PUBLIC HEARING ON MDOC CANCELED BECAUSE OF WEATHER

JACKSON - The first of three public hearings planned by a task force Gov. Phil Bryant created to oversee the Mississippi Department of Corrections' contracts review has been canceled for Saturday in Hattiesburg because of weather.

"The rainy weather and high winds would likely prevent us from having the level of participation that we want at our first hearing," said co-chairman Andy Taggart. "We will keep our other two hearings in place as currently scheduled, and will make a determination at a later date how to handle our missed hearing in Hattiesburg."

The next two hearings are set for:

- Cleveland, Delta State University, Hugh Ellis Walker Alumni Foundation House, 12 p.m.- 2 p.m., March 7, 2015
- Jackson, Woolfolk State Office Building, Room 145, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., March 20, 2015

Task force members also are accepting written comments. Written comments can be sent to taskforce@dfa.ms.gov or to the following address: Andy Taggart, MDOC Task Force Co-Chairman, 1022 Highland Colony Parkway, Suite 101, Ridgeland, MS 39157.

"The hearings are designed to provide task force members with real-life experiences about the contracting practices of MDOC," said Taggart, an attorney and former chief of staff to Gov. Kirk Fordice.

Elected officials, families of victims/survivors, families of inmates, current and prospective vendors, and suppliers to MDOC facilities are especially invited.

Attorney and former Hinds Circuit Judge Robert Gibbs is co-chairman of the task force. The three other task force members are:

- Mike Moore, an attorney and a former state attorney general
- Constance Slaughter-Harvey, an attorney, a former assistant secretary of state and president of the Legacy Foundation; and
- Bill Crawford: president of The Montgomery Institute and a former state lawmaker.

Bryant created the five-member panel in November following the indictment of former Corrections Commissioner Christopher B. Epps for allegedly accepting kickbacks for contracts.