



Legislative Summary 2026

The 2026 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature was predominantly defensive for MAFP. Numerous independent practice bills for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses were introduced; however, none advanced past the first committee deadline. This was a resounding victory for protecting the professional standards of physician care.

The legislature created the State Board of Health Professions ([HB 925](#), Sections 4 – 8) made up of representatives from each major health professional regulatory board (Medical Licensure, Pharmacy, Nursing, Chiropractic, Dental, and Optometry) as well as five members at large appointed by the Governor, to provide policy guidance to the Legislature on matters relating to the regulation or deregulation of health care professions and occupations.

MAFP advocated for increased funding for Medicaid to ensure shortfalls for the division would not fall on the backs of healthcare professionals. While it did not represent full funding, the legislature did appropriate \$200 Million above Medicaid's FY 26 budget, protecting reimbursements to providers from Medicaid cuts.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) received funding to pursue its quest to become a designated National Cancer Institute. The additional \$100 Million will go towards a new 250,000 square-foot cancer center and research institute. The designation is expected to boost access to clinical trials, improve survival rates, and allow patients to receive care closer to home. The legislature passed [HB 565](#), known as "Jill's Law," requiring insurance coverage for biomarker tests that identify personalized, targeted treatments for cancer, Alzheimer's, and other diseases. The legislature also passed [HB 856](#), prohibiting step therapy requirements for certain metastatic cancer treatments.

Legislation to move the MS Rural Physician Scholarship Program to the Department of Health failed to pass; however, interest persists by legislators if the program being housed at UMMC is best. The program was fully funded for FY 2027.

In the fall of 2025, Mississippi submitted a plan to the federal government outlining how the state intended to leverage money authorized for rural health transformation. Federal authorities approved the state's application and allotted it \$205,907,220.16. The Governor vetoed [SB 2477](#) that would have subjected these federal funds to the state's competitive bidding process. The Governor stated that all contracts will be subjected to federal laws and monitoring, and that the national Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will have to approve a detailed budget.

Numerous projects addressing abatement of opioid addiction consequences were funded utilizing nearly \$60 Million received through litigation against manufacturers and distributors of opioids. Non-profits, courts, state agencies, community mental health centers, and healthcare providers were among the many recipients.

Other notable actions include:

- HB [3](#), passed, allowing rural hospitals more flexibility to expand services under the Certificate of Need law;
- HB [1637](#), passed, creating the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Panel;
- HB [1665](#), addressing the practices and transparency of Pharmacy Benefit Managers; died on the House calendar under the deadline to concur or invite conference; &
- HB [1152](#), creating a “Right to Try” pathway for medical cannabis, was vetoed.