

NEWS RELEASE

Office of Commissioner Brandon Presley MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION NORTHERN DISTRICT

Presley Touts Increase in Utility Contracts through Hire Mississippi Program

Jackson, Mississippi (July 17, 2019) – Public Service Commissioner Brandon Presley announced today that in the first year of implementation of the PSC’s Hire Mississippi Rule, in-state utility construction contract to Mississippi-based companies has risen by 12.6 percent, representing millions spent with Mississippi-based businesses.

Construction contracts to Mississippi-based contractors have increased to 42.1 percent in the past year, up from 30 percent when the Public Service Commission measured operations and maintenance spending in 2017.

For example, Atmos Energy reported a 95 percent rate of Mississippi projects performed by Mississippi companies, followed by Spire Energy at 50 percent, CenterPoint Energy at 47 percent, Mississippi Power at 36 percent, and Entergy at 25 percent.

Additionally, contracts to Mississippi-based businesses from Atmos Energy, CenterPoint Energy, and Entergy totaled more than \$79.4 million for the preceding year.

The Hire Mississippi Rule, which was authored by Commissioner Presley, was passed by the Public Service Commission in 2017 and encourages the use of Mississippi contractors for construction projects by the state’s major utility companies.

Under the Hire Mississippi Rule, utilities are required to publish quarterly notices in local newspapers to advertise the opportunity to be on the Hire Mississippi List and must explain to Mississippi contractors the bidding process, qualifications, and other procedures for the awarding of contracts.



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Utility companies must also send notices of bidding opportunities to businesses that have registered on the Hire Mississippi List.

Under each contract where bidding is required, corporate utilities are asked whether Mississippi companies were awarded contracts for each project. In the event an out-of-state firm is selected for a project, the company must explain that decision.

“If the state government of Mississippi doesn’t fight for Mississippi businesses, no one else will,” said Commissioner Presley. “Keeping dollars spent by Mississippians on projects in our communities across our state just makes sense. My goal is to look out for Mississippi businesses and Mississippi contractors who want these contracts. These are investments in our local communities, neighbors helping neighbors. There’s no reason why qualified companies in our state should be passed over for this work.”



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