MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2021

By: Representative Hines

To: Accountability, Efficiency, Transparency; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 62

AN ACT TO PROHIBIT STATE AGENCIES ADMINISTERING PROGRAMS THAT PROVIDE MONETARY OR NONMONETARY ASSISTANCE, BENEFITS OR SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS FROM PUBLICLY DISCLOSING ANY PERSONAL OR IDENTIFYING INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE AGENCY FROM THE APPLICANTS IN SUCH MANNER AS TO REVEAL THE IDENTITY OF THE APPLICANTS; TO SPECIFY THE TYPE OF IDENTIFYING INFORMATION TO WHICH THIS ACT APPLIES; TO PROVIDE THAT BEFORE ANY INFORMATION RECEIVED BY A STATE AGENCY FROM AN APPLICANT MAY BE PROVIDED TO A PERSON OR ENTITY OUTSIDE OF THE AGENCY, THE AGENCY SHALL REDACT ALL IDENTIFYING INFORMATION FROM THE INFORMATION THAT IS PROVIDED; TO PROVIDE THAT A VIOLATION OF THIS ACT IS A MISDEMEANOR; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Each state agency administering a program that provides monetary or nonmonetary assistance, benefits or services to eligible applicants shall not publicly disclose any personal or identifying information received by the agency from the applicants in such manner as to reveal the identity of the applicants. The identifying information to which this section applies includes, but is not limited to, the applicant's name, residential address, mailing address, email address, telephone number, educational background, employment background and names of relatives. Before any information received by a state agency from

an applicant may be provided to a person or entity outside of the agency, the agency shall redact all identifying information from the information that is provided.

(2) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (1) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) or more than Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000.00), or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six (6) months, or both.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2021.

ST: State agencies; prohibit disclosure of identifying information received from program applicants.