



September 23, 2022

The Honorable Governor Tate Reeves  
550 High Street  
Sillers Building, 19th Floor  
Jackson, MS 39201  
BY EMAIL

Dear Governor Reeves:

We, the Mississippi State Conference NAACP, in conjunction with the National NAACP and its Environmental and Climate Justice Department, formally request that your administration take immediate measures to increase funding for the City of Jackson residents, in regard to the unjustified state of access to clean and healthy water. We have been in keen observance of the long history of Jackson getting less than its fair share of public funding from the Mississippi state budget and at times, being denied of any funding at all when it was deserved.

Please note that the money at issue that you have the responsibility to allocate comes from the federal government, thereby specifically, the people. The Biden Administration has made vividly clear that municipalities like Jackson, Mississippi should be prioritized with new funding that it is sending to the states for equitable distribution. Mississippi's current Intended Use Plan ("IUP") is not in line with this vision.

The state submitted an IUP that caps loan forgiveness at \$500,000. This amount is exceedingly low and falls well short of the billions of dollars it will cost to fix Jackson's water issues. As the NAACP Mississippi State Conference, we have been doing our part by distributing thousands of cases of bottled water, meeting with distressed residents, and urging for funding from all available agencies and organizations, in a true spirit of resiliency and self-determination that matches the rich history of this city. Therefore, when we saw that this plan was submitted during the water crisis, we were enraged.

It must be clear that only forgiving loans at such a small amount will ensure that Jackson will not be able to rebuild in a timely manner. And submitting a plan like this, knowing that a large predominantly Black population, along with our very own state capitol, cannot benefit is even more troubling.

We have met with Jackson residents from all sectors of the city and while they are trying to create short-term solutions, it is unnerving that you clearly have the ability to assist with a

much-improved intended use plan that would release more money to places like Jackson. Additionally, the only way to truly help Jackson is to ensure that they continue to control their Decisions.

Because the state of Mississippi has authority to make changes to revise the plan, we are requesting that you send a new IUP that represents the needed increased funding so that Jackson can actually benefit from this and other funding streams. We also request that the EPA reject the state's current Intended Use Plan until the funding formula is revised – and significantly upgraded – to assist the great city of Jackson, Mississippi.

Sincerely,



Charles Taylor  
Executive Director  
Mississippi State Conference NAACP

CC:

The Honorable Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann

Mr. Daniel Blackman  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. EPA Region 4

Mr. Kyle Brant  
Environmental Justice Specialist  
U.S. EPA Region 4

Mr. Chris Wells  
Executive Director  
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Daniel Edney, MD, FACP, FASAM, State Health Officer  
Christy Sones Barnett, MD, Regional Health Officer  
Mississippi State Department of Health

Mr. Kenny Wayne Jones  
Hinds County Administrator  
Hinds County Delegation

