



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR
STACEY E. PICKERING
STATE AUDITOR

February 5, 2018

Financial Audit Management Report

Cindy Hyde-Smith, Commissioner
Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce
121 North Jefferson Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

Dear Commissioner Hyde Smith:

The Office of the State Auditor has completed its audit of selected accounts included on the financial statements of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce for the year ended June 30, 2017. These financial statements will be consolidated into the State of Mississippi's *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The Office of the State Auditor's staff members participating in this engagement included Michael Torres, CPA and Jeremy Miller, CPA.

Our procedures and tests cannot and do not provide absolute assurance that all state legal requirements have been met. In accordance with Section 7-7-211, Miss. Code Ann. (1972), the Office of the State Auditor, when deemed necessary, may conduct additional procedures and tests of transactions for this or other fiscal years to ensure compliance with legal requirements.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of selected accounts included on the financial statements, we considered the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on these accounts, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's

financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether selected accounts included on the financial statements of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Mississippi Department of Commerce's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.

I appreciate the cooperation and courtesy extended by the officials and employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture & Commerce throughout the audit. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Stephanie C. Palmertree, CPA, CGMA
Director, Financial Audit and Compliance Division

End of Report