

By: Representative Scott (80th) (By Request) To: Education;  
Apportionment and  
Elections

## HOUSE BILL NO. 76

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-7-203, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT THE TRUSTEES OF MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL  
3 DISTRICTS SHALL BE ELECTED FROM SPECIAL TRUSTEE ELECTION DISTRICTS  
4 BY THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SUCH DISTRICT; TO PROVIDE THAT SUCH  
5 ELECTION SHALL BE HELD EVERY FOUR YEARS IN THE SAME MANNER AS  
6 ELECTIONS ARE HELD FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL OFFICERS; TO AMEND SECTION  
7 37-7-703, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE TRUSTEES  
8 OF SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHALL BE ELECTED IN  
9 THE SAME MANNER AS TRUSTEES OF MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL  
10 DISTRICTS; TO REPEAL SECTIONS 37-7-705 THROUGH 37-7-717,  
11 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE CERTAIN METHODS FOR  
12 SELECTING TRUSTEES OF SPECIAL MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS;  
13 TO REPEAL SECTIONS 37-7-209 THROUGH 37-7-219, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
14 1972, WHICH PROVIDE CERTAIN METHODS FOR ELECTING TRUSTEES OF  
15 MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS FROM ADDED TERRITORY; TO AMEND  
16 SECTION 37-9-13, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
17 APPOINTMENT OF ALL SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS FROM AND AFTER  
18 JANUARY 1, 2000; TO AMEND SECTION 37-9-25, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
19 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; TO REPEAL SECTION 37-9-12,  
20 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR A REFERENDUM ON THE  
21 QUESTION OF RETAINING THE ELECTIVE METHOD OF CHOOSING THE COUNTY  
22 SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION; TO REPEAL FROM AND AFTER JANUARY 1,  
23 1999, SECTIONS 37-5-61 THROUGH 37-5-75, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
24 WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE ELECTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS OF  
25 EDUCATION; TO AMEND SECTION 23-15-297, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
26 IN CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

28 SECTION 1. Section 37-7-203, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
29 amended as follows:

30 37-7-203. (1) The boards of trustees of all municipal  
31 separate school districts created under the provisions of Article  
32 1 of this chapter, either with or without added territory, shall  
33 consist of five (5) members. On the first Tuesday after the first  
34 Monday in June 2001, and every four (4) years thereafter, an  
35 election shall be held in each municipal separate school district  
36 in this state, in the same manner and at the same time as the  
37 regular municipal elections are held, for the purpose of electing  
38 the members of the boards of trustees established under the  
39 provisions of this article. All members of the boards of trustees

40 as constituted in this section shall take office on the first  
41 Monday of July following the date of their election and shall  
42 serve for a term of four (4) years. The five (5) members of the  
43 board of trustees of the school district shall be elected from  
44 special trustee election districts by the qualified electors of  
45 the district, as provided in this section. The governing  
46 authorities of the municipality shall apportion the municipal  
47 separate school district, including added territory, into five (5)  
48 special trustee election districts as nearly equal as possible  
49 according to population, incumbency and other factors pronounced  
50 by the courts before the effective date of this act. The  
51 municipal governing authority shall place upon its minutes the  
52 boundaries determined for the new five (5) trustee election  
53 districts. The municipal governing authority shall thereafter  
54 publish the same in a newspaper of general circulation within the  
55 school district for at least three (3) consecutive weeks; and  
56 after having given notice of publication and recording the same  
57 upon the minutes of the municipal governing authority, the new  
58 district lines shall thereafter be effective. All incumbent  
59 trustees holding office at the time of the creation of the trustee  
60 election districts shall continue holding their respective  
61 offices, provided they reside within the new district, for the  
62 remainder of the term of office to which they have been selected  
63 before the effective date of this act, and their successors shall  
64 be elected from the new trustee election districts constituted in  
65 this section in the manner provided for in this section.

66 (2) Vacancies in the membership of the board of trustees of  
67 any municipal separate school district shall be filled by  
68 appointment, within sixty (60) days after the vacancy occurs, by  
69 the governing authorities of the municipality. The appointee  
70 shall be selected from the qualified electors of the district in  
71 which the vacancy occurs. The president of the municipal  
72 governing authority shall certify to the Secretary of State the  
73 fact of the appointment, and the Governor shall commission the  
74 person appointed; and if the unexpired term is longer than six (6)  
75 months, the appointee shall serve until a successor is elected as  
76 provided in this section, unless the vacancy occurs ninety (90)  
77 days before the general election in a year in which an election

78 would normally be held for that office as provided by law, in  
79 which case the person appointed shall serve the unexpired portion  
80 of the term. The vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term  
81 by the qualified electors at the next regular special election day  
82 occurring more than ninety (90) days after the occurrence of the  
83 vacancy. The president of the municipal governing authority,  
84 within ten (10) days after the happening of the vacancy, shall  
85 make an order, in writing, directed to the commissioners of  
86 election, commanding an election to be held on the next regular  
87 special election day to fill the vacancy. The election  
88 commissioners shall require each candidate to qualify at least  
89 sixty (60) days before the date of the election, and shall give a  
90 certificate of election to the person elected, and shall return to  
91 the Secretary of State a copy of the order of holding the election  
92 and the results of the election, certified by the president of the  
93 municipal governing authority. The election shall be held in the  
94 same manner provided for other municipal office vacancies. The  
95 Governor shall commission the person elected.

96 However, where only one (1) person has qualified with the  
97 commissioners of election to be a candidate within the time  
98 provided by law, the commissioners of election shall certify to  
99 the municipal governing authority that there is but one (1)  
100 candidate. The municipal governing authority shall dispense with  
101 the election and shall appoint the certified candidate to fill the  
102 unexpired term. The president of the municipal governing  
103 authority shall certify to the Secretary of State the candidate so  
104 appointed to serve in the office and the Governor shall commission  
105 the candidate. If no person has qualified at least sixty (60)  
106 days before the date of the election, the commissioners of  
107 election shall certify that fact to the municipal governing  
108 authority, which shall dispense with the election and fill the  
109 vacancy by appointment. The president of the municipal governing  
110 authority shall certify to the Secretary of State the fact of the  
111 appointment, and the Governor shall commission the appointed

112 person.

113 SECTION 2. Section 37-7-703, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
114 amended as follows:

115 37-7-703. In all \* \* \* special municipal separate school  
116 districts, \* \* \* the board of trustees of such special municipal  
117 separate school district shall be elected in the manner provided  
118 by subsection (1) of Section 37-7-203, and all of the provisions  
119 thereof shall be fully applicable in all respects to the selection  
120 and constitution of such board of trustees.

121 SECTION 3. Sections 37-7-209, 37-7-211, 37-7-213, 37-7-215,  
122 37-7-217 and 37-7-219, Mississippi Code of 1972, which provide  
123 certain methods for electing trustees of municipal separate school  
124 districts from added territory, are repealed.

125 SECTION 4. Sections 37-7-705, 37-7-707, 37-7-709, 37-7-711,  
126 37-7-713, 37-7-715 and 37-7-717, Mississippi Code of 1972, which  
127 provide certain methods for selecting trustees of special  
128 municipal separate school districts, are repealed.

129 SECTION 5. Section 37-9-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
130 amended as follows:

131 37-9-13. (1) In all public school districts, the school  
132 board, on or before January 15 of each year, shall appoint the  
133 superintendent of schools of the district, except in those cases  
134 where the superintendent has been previously selected and has a  
135 contract which is valid for the ensuing scholastic year.

136 (2) \* \* \* No person shall be eligible to the office of  
137 superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid  
138 Class AA administrator's certificate issued by the State  
139 Department of Education and shall have had not less than four (4)  
140 years of classroom or administrative experience.

141 SECTION 6. Section 37-9-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
142 amended as follows:

143 37-9-25. The school board shall have the power and  
144 authority, in its discretion, to employ the superintendent \* \* \*  
145 for not exceeding four (4) scholastic years and the principals or

146 licensed employees for not exceeding three (3) scholastic years.  
147 In such case, contracts shall be entered into with such  
148 superintendents, principals and licensed employees for the number  
149 of years for which they have been employed. All such contracts  
150 with licensed employees shall for the years after the first year  
151 thereof be subject to the contingency that the licensed employee  
152 may be released if, during the life of the contract, the average  
153 daily attendance should decrease from that existing during the  
154 previous year and thus necessitate a reduction in the number of  
155 licensed employees during any year after the first year of the  
156 contract. However, in all such cases the licensed employee must  
157 be released before July 1 or at least thirty (30) days prior to  
158 the beginning of the school term, whichever date should occur  
159 earlier. The salary to be paid for the years after the first year  
160 of such contract shall be subject to revision, either upward or  
161 downward, in the event of an increase or decrease in the funds  
162 available for the payment thereof, but, unless such salary is  
163 revised prior to the beginning of a school year, it shall remain  
164 for such school year at the amount fixed in such contract.  
165 However, where school district funds, other than minimum education  
166 program funds, are available during the school year in excess of  
167 the amount anticipated at the beginning of the school year the  
168 salary to be paid for such year may be increased to the extent  
169 that such additional funds are available and nothing herein shall  
170 be construed to prohibit same.

171 SECTION 7. Section 37-9-12, Mississippi Code of 1972, which  
172 provides for a referendum on the question of retaining the  
173 elective method of choosing the county superintendent of  
174 education, is repealed.

175 SECTION 8. Sections 37-5-61, 37-5-63, 37-5-65, 37-5-67,  
176 37-5-69, 37-5-71 and 37-5-75, Mississippi Code of 1972, which  
177 provide for the election of county superintendents of education,  
178 are repealed from and after January 1, 2000.

179 SECTION 9. Section 23-15-297, Mississippi Code of 1972, is

180 amended as follows:

181           23-15-297. All candidates upon entering the race for party  
182 nominations for office shall first pay to the proper officer as  
183 provided for in Section 23-15-299 for each primary election the  
184 following amounts:

185           (a) Candidates for Governor not to exceed Three Hundred  
186 Dollars (\$300.00).

187           (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney  
188 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public  
189 Accounts, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture  
190 and Commerce, State Highway Commissioner and State Public Service  
191 Commissioner, not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

192           (c) Candidates for district attorney, not to exceed One  
193 Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

194           (d) Candidates for State Senator, State Representative,  
195 sheriff, chancery clerk, circuit clerk, tax assessor, tax  
196 collector, county attorney \* \* \* and board of supervisors, not to  
197 exceed Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00).

198           (e) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,  
199 justice court judge and constable, not to exceed Ten Dollars  
200 (\$10.00).

201           (f) Candidates for United States Senator, not to exceed  
202 Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00).

203           (g) Candidates for United States Representative, not to  
204 exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

205           SECTION 10. The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi  
206 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,  
207 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the  
208 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States  
209 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the  
210 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and  
211 extended.

212           SECTION 11. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
213 and after January 1, 2000, or the date it is effectuated under

214 Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and  
215 extended, whichever is later.