

By: Representative Blackmon

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 285

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON THE
2 CENSUS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE'S
3 MEMBERSHIP; TO PROVIDE FOR THE DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE; TO PROVIDE
4 FOR PER DIEM COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES; TO REQUIRE POLITICAL
5 SUBDIVISIONS AND STATE AGENCIES TO ASSIST THE COMMITTEE; TO
6 AUTHORIZE THE EMPLOYMENT OF EXPERTS AND OTHER STAFF; AND FOR
7 RELATED PURPOSES.

8 WHEREAS, the pending 2000 census will have serious
9 implications on congressional representation for the State of
10 Mississippi; and

11 WHEREAS, because of population shifts throughout the United
12 States, the possibility exists that Mississippi could lose a
13 congressional seat; and

14 WHEREAS, by thorough planning and precise population counting
15 the loss of a congressional seat could be avoided; and

16 WHEREAS, the creation of a Joint Legislative Committee on the
17 Census can help achieve these goals; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

19 SECTION 1. (1) There is hereby created the Joint
20 Legislative Committee on the Census, to be composed of
21 ten (10) members of the House of Representatives, two (2) from
22 each congressional district, to be appointed by the Speaker of the
23 House of Representatives; and ten (10) members of the Senate, two
24 (2) from each congressional district to be appointed by the
25 Lieutenant Governor. In the event the congressional districts of
26 the state shall change numerically, then the number appointed from
27 the Senate and appointed from the House by congressional districts
28 shall be adjusted accordingly. The members shall serve until the

29 end of the term of office for which such member has been elected.

30 The Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House of
31 Representatives shall call an organizational meeting of the
32 committee and the committee shall elect a chairman and such other
33 officers as they deem necessary. A majority vote of the members
34 of each house shall be required on all votes by the committee.

35 SECTION 2. The members of the committee shall develop
36 procedures to insure an accurate count for the census in 2000 and
37 shall make every effort to insure that the state will lose no
38 representation in congress. The committee shall study census
39 actions in other states to determine the best course of action for
40 Mississippi. The committee shall present its findings to the U.S.
41 Census Bureau before the federal decennial census is taken in
42 2000.

43 SECTION 3. The members of the committee shall be entitled to
44 receive per diem compensation for each day engaged in the
45 discharge of official duties at the same rate as compensated
46 during a special session of the Legislature. The members shall be
47 entitled to receive reimbursement for all actual, necessary
48 expenses incurred in the discharge of official duties, including
49 mileage as authorized by law. Per diem compensation and
50 reimbursement for expenses shall not be paid for more than thirty
51 (30) days in any calendar year.

52 SECTION 4. All political subdivisions, state agencies, and
53 all other creatures of the State of Mississippi are hereby
54 authorized and directed to assist the committee and to provide it
55 with such professional, technical, and other expertise as each may
56 possess when requested so to do. After an affirmative finding
57 that professional, technical, or other expertise is needed that
58 cannot be provided by the aforesaid political subdivisions, state
59 agencies, and other creatures of the state, then the committee may
60 employ or contract for such professional, technical, or other
61 expertise necessary to accomplish the apportionment. The
62 committee may employ staff personnel as it deems necessary.

63 SECTION 5. The committee may present any recommendations for
64 legislation to the Legislature in order to carry out its duties
65 under this act.

66 SECTION 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from
67 and after its passage.