

By: Representative Robinson (84th)

To: Education;
Apportionment and
Elections

HOUSE BILL NO. 934

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 2000, 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 **[Until December 31, 1999, this section will read as follows:]**

132 37-9-13. Each school district shall have a superintendent of
133 schools, selected in the manner provided by law. No person shall
134 be eligible to the office of superintendent of schools unless such
135 person shall hold a valid administrator's license issued by the
136 State Department of Education and shall have had not less than
137 four (4) years of classroom or administrative experience.

138 **[From and after January 1, 2000, this section will read as
139 follows:]**

140 37-9-13. (1) In all public school districts, the school
141 board, on or before January 15 of each year, shall appoint the
142 superintendent of schools of the district, except in those cases
143 where the superintendent has been previously selected and has a
144 contract which is valid for the ensuing scholastic year.

145 (2) * * * No person shall be eligible to the office of

146 superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid
147 Class AA administrator's certificate issued by the State
148 Department of Education and shall have had not less than four (4)
149 years of classroom or administrative experience.

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

152 **[Until December 31, 1999, this section will read as follows:]**

153 37-9-25. The school board shall have the power and
154 authority, in its discretion, to employ the superintendent, unless
155 such superintendent is elected, for not exceeding four (4)
156 scholastic years and the principals or licensed employees for not
157 exceeding three (3) scholastic years. In such case, contracts
158 shall be entered into with such superintendents, principals and
159 licensed employees for the number of years for which they have
160 been employed. All such contracts with licensed employees shall
161 for the years after the first year thereof be subject to the
162 contingency that the licensed employee may be released if, during
163 the life of the contract, the average daily attendance should
164 decrease from that existing during the previous year and thus
165 necessitate a reduction in the number of licensed employees during
166 any year after the first year of the contract. However, in all
167 such cases the licensed employee must be released before July 1 or
168 at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the school
169 term, whichever date should occur earlier. The salary to be paid
170 for the years after the first year of such contract shall be
171 subject to revision, either upward or downward, in the event of an
172 increase or decrease in the funds available for the payment
173 thereof, but, unless such salary is revised prior to the beginning
174 of a school year, it shall remain for such school year at the
175 amount fixed in such contract. However, where school district
176 funds, other than minimum education program funds, are available
177 during the school year in excess of the amount anticipated at the
178 beginning of the school year the salary to be paid for such year
179 may be increased to the extent that such additional funds are

180 available and nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit same.

181 **[From and after January 1, 2000, this section will read as**
182 **follows:]**

183 37-9-25. The school board shall have the power and
184 authority, in its discretion, to employ the superintendent * * *
185 for not exceeding four (4) scholastic years and the principals or
186 licensed employees for not exceeding three (3) scholastic years.
187 In such case, contracts shall be entered into with such
188 superintendents, principals and licensed employees for the number
189 of years for which they have been employed. All such contracts
190 with licensed employees shall for the years after the first year
191 thereof be subject to the contingency that the licensed employee
192 may be released if, during the life of the contract, the average
193 daily attendance should decrease from that existing during the
194 previous year and thus necessitate a reduction in the number of
195 licensed employees during any year after the first year of the
196 contract. However, in all such cases the licensed employee must
197 be released before July 1 or at least thirty (30) days prior to
198 the beginning of the school term, whichever date should occur
199 earlier. The salary to be paid for the years after the first year
200 of such contract shall be subject to revision, either upward or
201 downward, in the event of an increase or decrease in the funds
202 available for the payment thereof, but, unless such salary is
203 revised prior to the beginning of a school year, it shall remain
204 for such school year at the amount fixed in such contract.
205 However, where school district funds, other than minimum education
206 program funds, are available during the school year in excess of
207 the amount anticipated at the beginning of the school year the
208 salary to be paid for such year may be increased to the extent
209 that such additional funds are available and nothing herein shall
210 be construed to prohibit same.

211 SECTION 7. Section 37-9-12, Mississippi Code of 1972, which
212 provides for a referendum on the question of retaining the
213 elective method of choosing the county superintendent of

214 education, is repealed.

215 SECTION 8. Sections 37-5-61, 37-5-63, 37-5-65, 37-5-67,
216 37-5-69, 37-5-71 and 37-5-75, Mississippi Code of 1972, which
217 provide for the election of county superintendents of education,
218 are repealed from and after January 1, 2000.

219 SECTION 9. Section 23-15-297, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
220 amended as follows:

221 23-15-297. All candidates upon entering the race for party
222 nominations for office shall first pay to the proper officer as
223 provided for in Section 23-15-299 for each primary election the
224 following amounts:

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

227 (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney
228 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public
229 Accounts, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture
230 and Commerce, State Highway Commissioner and State Public Service
231 Commissioner, not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

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

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

238 (e) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,
239 justice court judge and constable, not to exceed Ten Dollars
240 (\$10.00).

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

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

245 SECTION 10. The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi
246 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,
247 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the

248 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States
249 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the
250 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
251 extended.

252 SECTION 11. This act shall take effect and be in force from
253 and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting
254 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.