

By: Senator(s) Canon

To: Wildlife and
Fisheries

SENATE BILL NO. 2320

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 55-3-33, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 WAIVE THE PARK ENTRANCE FEE FOR A CAR IF ALL PERSONS IN THE CAR
3 ARE OVER SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 55-3-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
6 amended as follows:

7 55-3-33. (1) The Mississippi Department of Wildlife,
8 Fisheries and Parks shall have the power and authority, and it
9 shall be its duty to:

10 (a) Take charge and have full jurisdiction and control
11 over all state parks, which parks shall be operated for the
12 purpose of providing outdoor recreational activities and enjoyment
13 for the citizens of the State of Mississippi and for the purpose
14 of attracting visitors to the state.

15 (b) Set up a uniform accounting procedure for the state
16 parks and prescribe the manner in which books, records and
17 accounts shall be kept, which procedure shall account for all
18 moneys taken in and expended by the various parks and shall
19 provide for periodic audits of such books.

20 (c) Accept gifts, bequests of money or other property,
21 real or personal, to be used for the purpose of advancing the
22 recreation and conservation interests in state parks. The
23 department is authorized, subject to approval by the State
24 Legislature, to purchase property, real or personal, to be used
25 for state park purposes.

26 (d) Contract with the State Transportation Commission,

any municipality or board of supervisors of the state for locating, constructing and maintaining roads and other improvements in state parks and for payment of a part of the costs thereof; however, no county or municipality more than twenty-five (25) miles distant from a state park may contract for, or do, or pay for any such work for a state park other than the International Gardens of Mississippi. Any county or municipality authorized to assist financially under the provisions of Sections 55-3-31 through 55-3-51 is authorized, in the discretion of its respective governing authority, to set aside, appropriate and expend moneys from the General Fund for the purpose of defraying such expense after a mandatory election is held on the question within the county or municipality.

(e) Designate employees as peace officers with power to make arrests for infraction of the rules and regulations of the department. Such officers are authorized to carry weapons and to enforce the laws of the State of Mississippi within the confines of a state park.

(f) Enforce and delegate the responsibility to enforce all reasonable rules and regulations governing the occupancy and use of lands and waters in state parks under its jurisdiction, supply recreational and conservation facilities and charge fees for the use of same; review all rates and charges for facilities and accommodations furnished at the various state parks annually, making such charges as are justified; and establish fees for entrance to state parks. The park entrance fee for a car shall be waived if every person in the car is sixty five (65) years of age or older.

Each park shall retain from revenues generated therein, a sum sufficient to pay necessary expenses of operation, but in no event to be less than seventy-five percent (75%) of such revenues.

(2) The department shall have the authority to lease to any entity, sell and convey or otherwise transfer to any county or

60 municipality, or close any state park or historical site within
61 its jurisdiction which received a General Fund subsidy in Fiscal
62 Year 1985 in excess of Two Dollars (\$2.00) per visitor to such
63 state park or historical site; provided, however, that this
64 authority shall not include the authority to sell, lease or convey
65 any park that was not in operation under the jurisdiction of the
66 department for a full fiscal year prior to Fiscal Year 1986.

67 (3) The department may execute agreements with
68 rails-to-trails and recreational districts by which the department
69 will assume responsibility for the operation and maintenance of
70 trails developed under Sections 55-25-1 through 55-25-15.

71 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
72 and after its passage.