

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Rules

SENATE BILL NO. 2546

1

2 AN ACT TO CREATE AND EMPOWER THE MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON  
 3 THE STATUS OF WOMEN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES. BE IT ENACTED BY  
 4 THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

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6 SECTION 1. (1) (a) There is hereby created the Mississippi  
 7 Commission on the Status of Women. The commission shall be  
 8 composed of thirteen (13) members to be appointed as follows:

9 (i) Five (5) members shall be appointed by the  
 10 Governor.

11 (ii) Five (5) members shall be appointed by the  
 12 Lieutenant Governor.

13 (iii) Three (3) members shall be appointed by the  
 14 Attorney General.

15 (b) The members of the commission shall be women and  
 16 men of recognized ability and achievement who are representative  
 17 of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the population of this  
 18 state. Members shall serve for terms of four (4) years each, and  
 19 no member may serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms. All  
 20 vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for the  
 21 unexpired term.

22 (c) The commission shall elect a chairman,  
 23 vice-chairman and secretary from among its members for terms of  
 24 two (2) years each, and any member is eligible for successive  
 25 elections to office.

26 (d) A quorum for transacting business shall be a  
 27 majority of the members of the commission.

28           (e) Members of the commission shall be reimbursed for  
29 expenses as provided in Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972,  
30 and shall receive per diem as provided in Section 25-3-69,  
31 Mississippi Code of 1972.

32           (f) The Lieutenant Governor and the Attorney General  
33 shall notify the Governor after they have made their appointments,  
34 and the Governor shall then designate a place and time for the  
35 initial organizational meeting of the commission.

36           (2) The commission shall have the powers and authority  
37 necessary to carry out the duties imposed upon it by this act,  
38 including, but not limited to, the following:

39           (a) To employ such administrative, technical and other  
40 personnel as may be necessary for the performance of its powers  
41 and duties;

42           (b) To hold hearings, make and sign any agreements and  
43 do or perform any acts which may be necessary, desirable or proper  
44 to carry out the purposes of this act;

45           (c) To cooperate with any state agency, authority,  
46 board, commission, department or institution to facilitate its  
47 implementation of the powers and duties granted to the commission  
48 in this act; and each such state agency, authority, board,  
49 commission, department or institution shall cooperate with the  
50 commission in the performance of its duties;

51           (d) To appoint advisers or advisory committees from  
52 time to time when the commission determines that the experience or  
53 expertise of such advisers or advisory committees is needed for  
54 projects of the commission; and

55           (e) To apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts and  
56 services from the state, the government of the United States or  
57 any of its agencies, or any other public or private source, for  
58 the purpose of defraying clerical and administrative costs as may  
59 be necessary in carrying out its duties under this act.

60           (3) (a) The commission shall study the following:

61 (i) Women's educational and employment problems,  
62 needs and opportunities;

63 (ii) State laws in regard to the civil and  
64 political rights of women, including pensions, tax requirements,  
65 property rights, marriage and dissolution of marriage provisions,  
66 and similar matters;

67 (iii) The effect of social attitudes and pressures  
68 and economic considerations in shaping the roles to be assumed by  
69 women in the society; and

70 (iv) Any laws, practices or conditions concerning  
71 or affecting women which impose special limitations or burdens  
72 upon them or upon society, or which limit or tend to limit  
73 opportunities available to women.

74 (b) The commission shall act as an information center  
75 on the status of women and women's educational, employment and  
76 other related needs.

77 (c) The commission shall recommend, develop, prepare or  
78 coordinate materials, projects or other activities and shall give  
79 technical and consultative advice to public or private groups or  
80 persons concerned with any of the following:

81 (i) Preventing or minimizing problems brought  
82 about by the changing roles and responsibilities of women; and

83 (ii) Developing programs to encourage and enable  
84 women to be fully contributing members of society.

85 (d) The commission may encourage women's organizations  
86 and other groups to institute local self-help activities designed  
87 to meet women's educational, employment and related needs.

88 (4) The commission shall make a report to the Legislature at  
89 the close of each fiscal year on its activities, findings and  
90 recommendations.

91 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
92 and after July 1, 1999.