

REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

MR. SPEAKER AND MR. PRESIDENT:

We, the undersigned conferees, have had under consideration the amendments to the following entitled **BILL**:

H.B. No. 973: Family support centers and parent education programs; authorize pilot program under Department of Education.

We, therefore, respectfully submit the following report and recommendation:

1. That the Senate recede from its Amendment No. 1.
2. That the House and Senate adopt the following amendment:

Amend by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

22 SECTION 1. (1) The State Department of Education, in its
23 discretion, may develop and implement a pilot program to assist in
24 the establishment of community-based family support centers and
25 individual family or parent education services. The goal of the
26 programs shall be to create a better life for families and
27 children in Mississippi, with emphasis being placed on the
28 emotional, physical, social and mental needs of the whole family.
29 The family support centers and family or parent education service
30 programs shall provide parents with opportunities to voluntarily
31 obtain support and services that will enable them to provide
32 optimum learning environments for their children, particularly
33 from birth to the age of three (3) years, within the home. The
34 family support centers shall serve to build community networks to
35 support children and families through the implementation of the
36 following care activities: parenting classes; developmental
37 programs for prekindergarten-age children during parent education
38 classes; support groups; individual family or parent education
39 services; a resource library; and resource and referral services.
40 Additional services may be provided to meet the identified family
41 needs of the community and in keeping with the goals of the
42 program. The family support centers shall focus on school
43 readiness and early literacy.

44 (2) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish

45 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit
46 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for
47 assistance in establishing a family support center. At least one
48 (1) family support center shall be established in each
49 congressional district.

50 (3) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish
51 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit
52 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for
53 individual family or parent education programs. Programs must use
54 research based, independently evaluated, proven research models
55 that are documented to have a positive impact on reducing special
56 education placements, development of language and social skills,
57 and parental involvement in schools.

58 (4) As part of the application process for participation in
59 the pilot program, applicants must demonstrate to the department
60 that the family support center is a collaborative undertaking of
61 various community organizations. Each applicant must have created
62 an advisory board for the family support center or parent
63 education services programs, involving the participation of the
64 local school district or districts, the city and county governing
65 authorities, the county health department, regional mental health
66 centers, the extension service, representatives of the Department
67 of Human Services and any other private or public entities
68 participating in the partnership.

69 (5) The State Department of Education may accept any funds,
70 public or private, made available to the department for the pilot
71 program. The funds shall be used to award grants to the
72 participating family support centers or family or parent education
73 services programs for the support of such programs. A family
74 support center or family or parent education services program may
75 use any available funding to support the administration and
76 programs of the center or education services program.

77 (6) The State Department of Education shall promulgate
78 rules and regulations necessary for the proper administration of
79 this section. An advisory group shall be established to assist in

80 the development of the rules and regulations for administration of
81 the program. Members of the advisory group shall include, but not
82 be limited to, representatives of the following categories:
83 parents; local school districts' parent education programs staff;
84 the Department of Human Services, Division of Family and
85 Children's Services; Head Start; the cooperative extension
86 services; and USOE funded parental assistance programs.

87 (7) If the family support center and family or parent
88 education services pilot programs authorized by this section are
89 implemented, the State Department of Education shall report to the
90 Legislature, within three (3) years after the pilot program's
91 implementation, on the desirability of expanding and permanently
92 establishing the program.

93 (8) The State Department of Education shall develop an
94 annual reporting process to inform the Legislature, local school
95 district personnel and the general public as to all existing early
96 childhood programs in the state:

97 (a) Number of students and families served;

98 (b) Number of teachers and other personnel,
99 certification and experience levels;

100 (c) Source of funds for each program;

101 (d) Budget, administrative costs and other pertinent
102 fiscal information;

103 (e) Salary and fringe benefit information for each
104 employee in an early childhood program;

105 (f) Cost of materials and other instructional costs
106 related to an early childhood program;

107 (g) Other information as directed by the State Board of
108 Education; and

109 (h) Analysis of this program's impact on Grades K-3.

110 SECTION 2. The following provision shall be codified as
111 Section 37-57-102, Mississippi Code of 1972:

112 37-57-102. For purposes of this chapter, the term "property"
113 shall have such meaning as is prescribed by Section 1-3-45,
114 Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

115 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from
116 and after July 1, 1999.

**Further, amend by striking the title in its entirety and
inserting in lieu thereof the following:**

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
2 IMPLEMENT A PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FAMILY
3 SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
4 GOAL OF FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHALL
5 BE TO CREATE A BETTER LIFE FOR MISSISSIPPI FAMILIES AND CHILDREN;
6 TO SPECIFY CERTAIN PROGRAMS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH FAMILY
7 SUPPORT CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH AN
8 APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO
9 REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO HAVE IN PLACE AN ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE
10 FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO USE
11 AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR GRANTS TO PARTICIPATING FAMILY SUPPORT
12 CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO APPOINT AN ADVISORY
13 COMMITTEE TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN PROMULGATING REGULATIONS FOR
14 THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO RECOMMEND TO THE
15 LEGISLATURE WHETHER OR NOT THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY
16 ESTABLISHED; TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
17 DEVELOP A REPORTING PROCESS ON EXISTING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS
18 IN THE STATE; TO CODIFY SECTION 37-57-102, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
19 1972, TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF "PROPERTY" FOR SCHOOL AD
20 VALOREM TAX PURPOSES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

CONFEREES FOR THE HOUSE:

CONFEREES FOR THE SENATE:

X _____
Mike Chaney

X _____
Grey F. Ferris

X _____
Sara R. Thomas

X _____
Ron Farris

X _____
Eloise Scott

X _____
Robert L. Johnson III