

By: Scott (17th), Clarke, Barnett (92nd),
Broomfield, Coleman (29th), Cummings, Davis,
Henderson, Holland, Huddleston, Hudson,
Jennings, Markham, Mayo, Miles, Mitchell,
Montgomery (15th), Morris, Peranich,
Reynolds, Smith (27th), Thomas, Thornton,
Wallace, Ward, Warren, Young

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 418

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES INTERAGENCY
2 COORDINATING COUNCIL; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP AND
3 ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNCIL; TO DEFINE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE
4 COUNCIL; TO ESTABLISH AN INTERAGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE
5 EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES INTERAGENCY COUNCIL; TO PROVIDE FOR THE
6 MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADVISORY
7 COMMITTEE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 SECTION 1. (1) As used in this act, the term "preschool
10 children" means any children who have not entered kindergarten.

11 (2) To ensure that all children have access to quality early
12 childhood education and development services, the Legislature
13 finds and declares the following:

14 (a) Parents have the primary duty to educate their
15 young preschool children;

16 (b) The State of Mississippi can assist and educate
17 parents in their role as the primary caregivers and educators of
18 young preschool children; and

19 (c) There is a need to explore innovative approaches
20 and strategies for aiding parents and families in the education
21 and development of young preschool children.

22 SECTION 2. (1) The Early Childhood Services Interagency
23 Coordinating Council is created to ensure coordination among the
24 various agencies and programs serving preschool children in order
25 to support school district's efforts to achieve the goal of
26 readiness to start school, to facilitate communication,
27 cooperation and maximum use of resources and to promote high
28 standards for all programs serving preschool children and their

29 families in Mississippi.

30 (2) The membership of the Early Childhood Services
31 Interagency Coordinating Council shall be as follows:

32 (a) The State Superintendent of Public Education;

33 (b) The Executive Director of the State Department of
34 Health;

35 (c) The Executive Director of the Department of Human
36 Services;

37 (d) The Executive Director of the State Department of
38 Mental Health;

39 (e) The Executive Director of the Division of Medicaid,
40 Office of the Governor;

41 (f) The Executive Director of the State Department of
42 Rehabilitation Services;

43 (g) The Commissioner of Higher Education;

44 (h) The Executive Director of the State Board for
45 Community and Junior Colleges; and

46 (i) The Executive Director of Mississippi Educational
47 Television.

48 (3) The council shall meet upon call of the Governor before
49 August 1, 2000, and shall organize for business by selecting a
50 chairman, who shall serve for a one-year term and may be selected
51 for subsequent terms. The council shall adopt internal
52 organizational procedures necessary for efficient operation of the
53 council. Council procedures must include duties of officers, a
54 process for selecting officers, quorum requirements for conducting
55 business and policies for any council staff. Each member of the
56 council shall designate necessary staff of their departments to
57 assist the council in performing its duties and responsibilities.

58 The council shall meet and conduct business at least quarterly.
59 Meetings of the council must be open to the public, and
60 opportunity for public comment must be made available at each
61 meeting. The chairman of the council shall notify all persons who
62 request such notice as to the date, time and place of each
63 meeting.

64 (4) Members of the council may not receive compensation for
65 their services but must be reimbursed for travel and other

66 expenses actually incurred in the performance of their official
67 duties. The reimbursement must be paid in accordance with Section
68 25-3-41, and must be approved by the chairman of the council.

69 (5) The Early Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating
70 Council shall perform each of the following duties:

71 (a) Serve as interagency coordinating council for the
72 various agencies and public and private programs serving preschool
73 children and their families in the State of Mississippi;

74 (b) Advise the State Board of Health, State Board of
75 Education, Department of Human Services, State Department of
76 Mental Health, Division of Medicaid, State Department of
77 Rehabilitation Services and any other appropriate agency of
78 standards, rules, rule revisions, agency guidelines and
79 administration affecting child care facilities, prekindergarten
80 programs, family training programs and other programs and services
81 for preschool children and families;

82 (c) Collect, compile and distribute data relating to
83 all programs and services for preschool children and families,
84 including, but not limited to, an inventory of the programs and
85 services available in each county of the state, and identify and
86 make recommendations with regard to program areas for which an
87 unfulfilled need exists within the state for accurate and
88 accessible information;

89 (d) Review and analyze spending priorities for each
90 state agency that utilizes state or federal funds in the
91 administration or provision of programs and services for preschool
92 children and make recommendations thereon to the Legislative
93 Budget Committee and the Governor;

94 (e) Publish annually, before November 1, a
95 comprehensive report on the status of all programs and services
96 for preschool children in Mississippi and distribute the report to
97 the Governor, the Legislature and local school districts and make
98 the report available to the general public, using the following

99 criteria:

- 100 (i) Program name and location;
- 101 (ii) Dates of operation;
- 102 (iii) Services provided;
- 103 (iv) Target population and number served;
- 104 (v) Eligibility requirements;
- 105 (vi) Funding sources;
- 106 (vii) Amount of funding per unit;
- 107 (viii) Annual cost;
- 108 (ix) Evaluation type and results; and
- 109 (x) The state agency administering the program.

110 (f) Receive and consider recommendations of the
111 Interagency Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Services
112 established in Section 3; and

113 (g) Apply for, receive and administer funds for
114 administration, research, pilot, planning and evaluation of all
115 programs serving preschool children and their families.

116 SECTION 3. (1) The Interagency Advisory Committee for Early
117 Childhood Services is created to develop and make recommendations
118 to the Early Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council
119 established under Section 2 of this act as deemed necessary to
120 implement the council's responsibilities relating to all programs
121 serving preschool children and their families in Mississippi.

122 (2) The membership of the Interagency Advisory Committee for
123 Early Childhood Services shall be as follows:

124 (a) The Chairmen of the Senate Education, Public Health
125 and Welfare and Appropriations Committees, or their Senate
126 designees;

127 (b) The Chairmen of the House Education, Public Health
128 and Welfare and Appropriations Committees, or their House
129 designees;

130 (c) A representative of the Governor;

131 (d) A representative of the State Department of

132 Education;

133 (e) A representative of the State Department of Health;

134 (f) A representative of the Department of Human

135 Services;

136 (g) A representative of the State Department of Mental

137 Health;

138 (h) A representative of the State Department of

139 Rehabilitation Services;

140 (i) The following representatives of the early

141 childhood profession:

142 (i) The President of the Mississippi Head Start

143 Association;

144 (ii) A representative from a regulated family

145 child care home network appointed by the Governor;

146 (iii) A representative from a licensed child care

147 center appointed by the President of the Senate;

148 (iv) A representative from a public school

149 prekindergarten program appointed by the Speaker of the House;

150 (v) A representative from a private school

151 prekindergarten program appointed by the Governor;

152 (vi) A representative from a half-day church

153 sponsored prekindergarten program appointed by the Speaker of the

154 House;

155 (vii) A representative from a university or

156 college early childhood program appointed by the President of the

157 Senate;

158 (viii) A representative of a tribal early

159 childhood program appointed by the Governor;

160 (ix) A representative of an early childhood

161 professional organization appointed by the President of the

162 Senate;

163 (x) A representative of an advocacy organization

164 appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

- 165 (xi) A representative of a community or junior
166 college early childhood program appointed by the Governor;
- 167 (j) A parent of a preschool-age child appointed by the
168 Governor;
- 169 (k) A parent of a preschool-age child with special
170 needs appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- 171 (l) A representative of the cooperative extension
172 services appointed by the President of the Senate;
- 173 (m) A physician who is a member of the Mississippi
174 Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, appointed by the
175 Director of the University Medical Center;
- 176 (n) The Director of the Mississippi Public Education
177 Forum, or his designee; and
- 178 (o) The Executive Director of the Mississippi Economic
179 Council, or his designee.

180 To the extent possible, any representative of a state agency
181 designated to serve on the Interagency Advisory Committee shall be
182 the same individual designated to assist the Interagency
183 Coordinating Council in performing its duties and
184 responsibilities.

185 (3) The advisory committee shall meet upon call of the Early
186 Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council before August
187 1, 2000, and the council shall appoint a chairman from among the
188 membership of the advisory committee. The chairman shall serve
189 for a one-year term and may be reappointed for subsequent terms.
190 The advisory committee shall adopt internal organizational
191 procedures necessary for efficient operation of the advisory
192 committee and may establish subcommittees for conducting specific
193 programs and activities. Advisory committee procedures must
194 include duties of officers, a process for selecting officers,
195 duties of subcommittees, quorum requirements for conducting
196 business and policies for any staff. The members of the Early
197 Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council shall

198 designate necessary staff of their departments to assist the
199 advisory committee in performing its duties and responsibilities.

200 The advisory committee shall meet and conduct business at least
201 quarterly. Quarterly meetings of the advisory committee shall be
202 open to the public, and opportunity for public comment must be
203 made available at each meeting. The staff of the advisory
204 committee shall notify all persons who request such notice as to
205 the date, time and place of each meeting.

206 (4) Nonlegislative members of the advisory committee may not
207 receive compensation for their services but must be reimbursed for
208 travel and other expenses actually incurred in the performance of
209 their official duties. The reimbursement must be paid in
210 accordance with Section 25-3-41 and must be approved by the
211 chairman of the advisory committee. Legislative members of the
212 advisory committee shall receive the same per diem and expense
213 reimbursement as is authorized for interim committee meetings,
214 which must be paid from the contingent expense funds of the
215 respective chamber.

216 (5) The Interagency Advisory Committee for Early Childhood
217 Services, in addition to responsibilities assigned by the Early
218 Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council, shall perform
219 each of the following duties:

220 (a) Assist in the implementation of the study conducted
221 by the Task Force on the Development and Implementation of
222 Comprehensive Early Childhood Services in Mississippi established
223 under Senate Bill No. 2618, 1999 Regular Session;

224 (b) Identify services to children which impact early
225 childhood development and education;

226 (c) Identify and recommend methods to facilitate
227 interagency coordination of service programs for preschool
228 children;

229 (d) Serve as a forum for information exchange regarding
230 recommendations and priorities in early childhood development and

231 education; and

232 (e) Advise and make recommendations to the Interagency
233 Coordinating Council as deemed necessary to effectuate the
234 council's responsibilities.

235 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from
236 and after July 1, 2000.