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To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 418
(As Passed the House)

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) The Early Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating
65 Council shall perform each of the following duties:

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

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

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

84 (d) Review and analyze spending priorities for each
85 state agency that utilizes state or federal funds in the
86 administration or provision of programs and services for preschool
87 children and make recommendations thereon to the Legislative
88 Budget Committee and the Governor;

89 (e) Publish annually, before November 1, a
90 comprehensive report on the status of all programs and services
91 for preschool children in Mississippi and distribute the report to
92 the Governor, the Legislature and local school districts and make
93 the report available to the general public, using the following
94 criteria:

- 95 (i) Program name and location;
- 96 (ii) Dates of operation;
- 97 (iii) Services provided;
- 98 (iv) Target population and number served;

99 (v) Eligibility requirements;
100 (vi) Funding sources;
101 (vii) Amount of funding per unit;
102 (viii) Annual cost;
103 (ix) Evaluation type and results; and
104 (x) The state agency administering the program.

105 (f) Receive and consider recommendations of the
106 Interagency Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Services
107 established in Section 3; and

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

111 (5) If any agency represented on the Early Childhood
112 Services Interagency Coordinating Council includes a request for
113 funding for the support of the council in the agency's annual
114 budget request presented to the Legislative Budget Committee the
115 Early Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council shall be
116 abolished, effective on the date that the agency presents its
117 budget request.

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

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

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

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

132 (c) A representative of the Governor;

133 (d) A representative of the State Department of
134 Education;

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

136 (f) A representative of the Department of Human
137 Services;

138 (g) A representative of the State Department of Mental
139 Health;

140 (h) A representative of the State Department of
141 Rehabilitation Services;

142 (i) The following representatives of the early
143 childhood profession:

144 (i) The President of the Mississippi Head Start
145 Association;

146 (ii) A representative from a regulated family
147 child care home network appointed by the Governor;

148 (iii) A representative from a licensed child care
149 center appointed by the President of the Senate;

150 (iv) A representative from a public school
151 prekindergarten program appointed by the Speaker of the House;

152 (v) A representative from a private school
153 prekindergarten program appointed by the Governor;

154 (vi) A representative from a half-day church
155 sponsored prekindergarten program appointed by the Speaker of the
156 House;

157 (vii) A representative from a university or
158 college early childhood program appointed by the President of the
159 Senate;

160 (viii) A representative of a tribal early
161 childhood program appointed by the Governor;

162 (ix) A representative of an early childhood
163 professional organization appointed by the President of the
164 Senate;

165 (x) A representative of an advocacy organization
166 appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

167 (xi) A representative of a community or junior
168 college early childhood program appointed by the Governor;

169 (j) A parent of a preschool-age child appointed by the
170 Governor;

171 (k) A parent of a preschool-age child with special
172 needs appointed by the Speaker of the House;

173 (l) A representative of the cooperative extension
174 services appointed by the President of the Senate;

175 (m) A physician who is a member of the Mississippi
176 Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, appointed by the
177 Director of the University Medical Center;

178 (n) The Director of the Mississippi Public Education
179 Forum, or his designee; and

180 (o) The Executive Director of the Mississippi Economic
181 Council, or his designee.

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

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

198 business and policies for any staff. The members of the Early
199 Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council shall
200 designate necessary staff of their departments to assist the
201 advisory committee in performing its duties and responsibilities.

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

208 (4) The Interagency Advisory Committee for Early Childhood
209 Services, in addition to responsibilities assigned by the Early
210 Childhood Services Interagency Coordinating Council, shall perform
211 each of the following duties:

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

216 (b) Identify services to children which impact early
217 childhood development and education;

218 (c) Identify and recommend methods to facilitate
219 interagency coordination of service programs for preschool
220 children;

221 (d) Serve as a forum for information exchange regarding
222 recommendations and priorities in early childhood development and
223 education; and

224 (e) Advise and make recommendations to the Interagency
225 Coordinating Council as deemed necessary to effectuate the
226 council's responsibilities.

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