

By: Moore (60th)

To: Education;
Apportionment and
Elections

HOUSE BILL NO. 978

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 PROVIDE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC
3 EDUCATION BEGINNING AT THE GENERAL STATE ELECTION IN 2003; TO
4 AMEND SECTION 37-3-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE CERTAIN
5 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION;
6 TO AMEND SECTIONS 23-15-193, 23-15-297 AND 23-15-603, MISSISSIPPI
7 CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT; AND FOR
8 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 SECTION 1. Section 37-3-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 37-3-9. (1) Until the commencement of the term of office of
13 the State Superintendent of Public Education elected at the
14 general state election in 2003, there shall be a State
15 Superintendent of Public Education who shall be appointed by the
16 State Board of Education, with the advice and consent of the
17 Senate, and serve at the board's will and pleasure.

18 (2) Beginning at the general state election in 2003, there
19 shall be a State Superintendent of Public Education elected at the
20 same time and manner as the Governor, who shall hold the office
21 for a term of four (4) years, and until a successor is elected and
22 qualified. The first term of office of the elected State
23 Superintendent of Public Education shall commence in January 2004.

24 (3) The State Superintendent of Public Education shall be
25 the chief administrative officer for the State Department of
26 Education and shall administer the department in accordance with
27 the policies established by the State Board of Education. The
28 state superintendent shall receive such compensation in an amount
29 equal to ninety percent (90%) of the salary of the Commissioner of

30 Higher Education. The State Superintendent of Public Education
31 shall have at least a master's degree in any field and a minimum
32 of five (5) years' experience in administration in the educational
33 field.

34 The state superintendent shall give bond in the penalty of
35 Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00), with sureties to be
36 approved by the Governor, conditioned according to law. The bond,
37 when approved, shall be filed and recorded in the office of the
38 Secretary of State.

39 SECTION 2. Section 37-3-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
40 amended as follows:

41 37-3-11. * * *

42 * * * The State Superintendent of Public Education
43 shall * * * have the following duties:

44 (a) To appoint the assistant state superintendent of
45 public education to serve as secretary for the State Board of
46 Education;

47 (b) To be the chief administrative officer of the State
48 Department of Education;

49 (c) To recommend to the State Board of Education for
50 its consideration rules and regulations for the supervision of the
51 public free schools and agricultural high schools of the state and
52 for the efficient organization and conduct of the same;

53 (d) To collect data and make it available to the State
54 Board for determining the proper distribution of the state common
55 school funds;

56 (e) To keep a complete record of all official acts of
57 the state superintendent and the acts of the State Board of
58 Education;

59 (f) To prepare, have printed and furnish all officers
60 charged with the administration of the laws pertaining to the
61 public schools, such blank forms and books as may be necessary to
62 the proper discharge of their duties, which printing shall be paid
63 for out of funds provided by the Legislature;

64 (g) To have printed in pamphlet form the laws
65 pertaining to the public schools and publish therein forms for
66 conducting school business, the rules and regulations for the

67 government of schools that the State Superintendent or the Board
68 of Education may recommend, and such other matters as may be
69 deemed worthy of public interest pertaining to the public schools,
70 which printing shall be paid for out of funds provided by the
71 Legislature;

72 (h) To meet all superintendents annually at such time
73 and place as the State Superintendent shall appoint for the
74 purpose of accumulating facts relative to schools, to review the
75 educational progress made in the various sections of the state, to
76 compare views, discuss problems, hear discussions and suggestions
77 relative to examinations and qualifications of teachers, methods
78 of instruction, textbooks, summer schools for teachers, visitation
79 of schools, consolidation of schools, health work in the schools,
80 vocational education and other matters pertaining to the public
81 school system;

82 (i) To advise all superintendents upon all matters
83 involving the welfare of the schools, and at the request of any
84 superintendent to give an opinion upon a written statement of
85 facts on all questions and controversies arising out of the
86 interpretation and construction of the school laws, in regard to
87 rights, powers and duties of school officers and superintendents,
88 and to keep a record of all such decisions. Before giving any
89 opinion, the superintendent may submit the statement of facts to
90 the Attorney General, and it shall be the duty of the Attorney
91 General forthwith to examine such statement and suggest the proper
92 decision to be made upon such fact;

93 (j) To require annually, and as often as the State
94 Superintendent may deem proper, of all superintendents, detailed
95 reports on the educational business of the various districts;

96 (k) On or before January 10 in each year to prepare
97 under the direction of the State Board of Education and have
98 printed the annual report of the board to the Legislature showing:

99 (i) The receipts and disbursements of all school

100 funds handled by the board;

101 (ii) The number of school districts, school
102 teachers employed, school administrators employed, pupils taught
103 and the attendance record of pupils therein;

104 (iii) County and district levies for each school
105 district and agricultural high school;

106 (iv) The condition of vocational education, a list
107 of schools to which federal and state aid has been given, and a
108 detailed statement of the expenditures of federal funds and the
109 state funds that may be provided, and the ranking of subjects
110 taught as compared with the state's needs;

111 (v) Such general matters, information and
112 recommendations as relate, in the board's opinion, to the
113 educational interests of the state;

114 (1) To determine the number of educable children in the
115 several school districts under rules and regulations prescribed by
116 the State Board of Education; and

117 (m) To perform such other duties as may be prescribed
118 by law.

119 SECTION 3. Section 23-15-193, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
120 amended as follows:

121 23-15-193. At the election in 2003, and every four (4) years
122 thereafter, there shall be elected a Governor, Lieutenant
123 Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor of Public Accounts, State
124 Treasurer, Attorney General, State Superintendent of Public
125 Education, three (3) public service commissioners, three (3)
126 Mississippi Transportation Commissioners, Commissioner of
127 Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, Senators and
128 members of the House of Representatives in the Legislature,
129 district attorneys for the several districts, clerks of the
130 circuit and chancery courts of the several counties, as well as
131 sheriffs, coroners, assessors, surveyors and members of the boards
132 of supervisors, justice court judges and constables, and all other

133 officers to be elected by the people at the general state
134 election. All such officers shall hold their offices for a term
135 of four (4) years, and until their successors are elected and
136 qualified. The state officers shall be elected in the manner
137 prescribed in Section 140 of the Constitution.

138 SECTION 4. Section 23-15-297, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
139 amended as follows:

140 23-15-297. All candidates upon entering the race for party
141 nominations for office shall first pay to the proper officer as
142 provided for in Section 23-15-299 for each primary election the
143 following amounts:

144 (a) Candidates for Governor not to exceed Three Hundred
145 Dollars (\$300.00).

146 (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney
147 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public
148 Accounts, State Superintendent of Public Education, Commissioner
149 of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce, State
150 Highway Commissioner and State Public Service Commissioner, not to
151 exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

152 (c) Candidates for district attorney, not to exceed One
153 Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

154 (d) Candidates for State Senator, State Representative,
155 sheriff, chancery clerk, circuit clerk, tax assessor, tax
156 collector, county attorney, county superintendent of education and
157 board of supervisors, not to exceed Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00).

158 (e) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,
159 justice court judge and constable, not to exceed Ten Dollars
160 (\$10.00).

161 (f) Candidates for United States Senator, not to exceed
162 Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00).

163 (g) Candidates for United States Representative, not to
164 exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

165 SECTION 5. Section 23-15-603, Mississippi Code of 1972, is

166 amended as follows:

167 23-15-603. The commissioners of election shall, within ten
168 (10) days after the general election, transmit to the Secretary of
169 State, to be filed in his office, a statement of the whole number
170 of votes given in their county for each candidate for any office
171 at the election; but the returns of every election for Governor,
172 Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Auditor
173 of Public Accounts, State Treasurer, State Superintendent of
174 Public Education, Commissioner of Insurance and other state
175 officers, shall each be made out separately, sealed up together
176 and transmitted to the seat of government, directed to the
177 Secretary of State, and endorsed the "VOTE FOR STATE OFFICERS," to
178 be delivered by the Secretary of State to the Speaker of the House
179 of Representatives at the next ensuing session of the Legislature.

180 Constitutional amendments shall be voted for at the time fixed by
181 the concurrent resolution. The election, whether held separately
182 or with other elections, shall be conducted, in all respects, as
183 required for elections generally. The returns shall be made by
184 the election commissioners to the Secretary of State and shall be
185 tabulated by him and submitted to each branch of the Legislature,
186 at the session next ensuing.

187 SECTION 6. The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi
188 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,
189 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the
190 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States
191 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the
192 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
193 extended.

194 SECTION 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from
195 and after either the date it is effectuated under the Voting
196 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended, or the date that
197 House Concurrent Resolution ____, 2000 Regular Session, takes
198 effect, whichever is the later date; however, this act shall take

199 effect and be in force only if it is effectuated under the Voting
200 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended, and only if House
201 Concurrent Resolution ____, 2000 Regular Session, takes effect by
202 effectuation under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
203 extended, and by ratification of the electorate at the November
204 2000 general election.