

By: Guice (By Request)

To: Education

## HOUSE BILL NO. 1070

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ANY LOCAL SCHOOL  
2 DISTRICT TO ESTABLISH A STUDENT UNIFORM POLICY WHICH MAY BE  
3 IMPLEMENTED BY ANY PUBLIC SCHOOL WITHIN THE DISTRICT; TO PRESCRIBE  
4 THE MANNER AND PROCEDURE OF THE ADOPTION OF SUCH POLICY; TO PLACE  
5 RESTRICTIONS AND CONDITIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUCH POLICY;  
6 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 SECTION 1. (1) The board of trustees of any local school  
9 district, in its discretion, may establish a student uniform  
10 policy which may be implemented by any school within the district  
11 in accordance with the provisions of this act.

12 (2) The principal, an administrator or any faculty member or  
13 members of any school within a school district, or the parent or  
14 parents of any student enrolled in a school within the district,  
15 may request the board of trustees of the school district to  
16 conduct a survey to determine the interest that educators and  
17 parents of students in the district may have in developing a  
18 policy for the establishment of student uniforms. If such survey  
19 is requested, the school board shall prepare a questionnaire and  
20 circulate it among all parents of students in the district and all  
21 students in the district who are at least eighteen (18) years of  
22 age. If the results of the survey favor development of a student  
23 uniform policy, the school board shall appoint a committee  
24 consisting of school administrators, teachers, parents and  
25 students within the district to assist the school board in  
26 developing the policy, with each school within the district having  
27 at least one (1) representative on the committee.

28 (3) The committee appointed under subsection (2) of this

29 section shall develop its recommendations with regard to a uniform  
30 policy based upon the results of the survey conducted under  
31 subsection (2) of this section, research and local preferences.  
32 The recommendations of the committee shall address:

33 (a) The colors, styles and types of clothing suitable  
34 for uniforms;

35 (b) Whether uniforms should be designed for use by  
36 students on a district-wide basis, a school-by-school basis or a  
37 grade-level basis;

38 (c) The timetable for implementing the uniform policy,  
39 which may not be sooner than six (6) months after appointment of  
40 the committee;

41 (d) The extent to which the uniform policy should apply  
42 to administrators and staff;

43 (e) The extent, if any, to which assistance should be  
44 given to students from economically disadvantaged families; and

45 (f) Whether the wearing of uniforms should be voluntary  
46 or mandatory.

47 (4) If the committee recommends that uniforms be mandatory,  
48 then the uniform policy must:

49 (a) Take into account the religious and moral beliefs  
50 of parents and allow for the free expression of political,  
51 philosophical and religious beliefs of students;

52 (b) Explicitly define the manner and procedure for  
53 enforcement of the policy; and

54 (c) Include one (1) of the following options:

55 (i) Compliance by students eighteen (18) years of  
56 age or older shall be voluntary;

57 (ii) A student's parents, regardless of the age of  
58 the student, may exempt their child from the policy by filing a  
59 written request for exemption with the administrator of the school  
60 where the student attends; or

61 (iii) At least one (1) school in the district

62 shall be designated as "uniform-free" and any parent opposed to  
63 wearing of uniforms by his or her child shall be allowed to enroll  
64 his or her child in that school. The school district shall  
65 consider this option when planning teacher assignments, bus routes  
66 and similar organizational structure of the schools in the  
67 district.

68 (5) Upon submission of the recommendations of the committee  
69 to the school board, the school board shall distribute a proposed  
70 draft of the uniform policy to the parents and students in the  
71 district for approval or disapproval of the policy. Each family  
72 having a student who attends a public school in the school  
73 district shall have one (1) vote. The proposed uniform policy may  
74 be adopted only upon approval by at least two-thirds (2/3) of such  
75 families; however, the board of trustees of the school district  
76 shall have final approval of any school uniform policy before its  
77 implementation. If a school uniform policy is adopted, the policy  
78 shall be reconsidered each year by the school board.

79 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
80 and after July 1, 2000.