

By: Scott (80th), Blackmon

To: Juvenile Justice;
AppropriationsCOMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1167

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE POSITION OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER
2 UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AS A FIVE-YEAR PILOT
3 PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE PROGRAM TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN SCHOOL
4 DISTRICTS CHARACTERIZED BY POOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE, HIGH CRIME
5 RATES OR DELINQUENT ACTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
6 SERVICES SHALL ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SALARY FOR
7 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS; TO AUTHORIZE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS TO
8 USE SCHOOL FACILITIES IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES; TO
9 PROVIDE THAT EACH SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER SHALL IMPLEMENT A
10 MENTORING PROGRAM IN ORDER TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH POSITIVE ROLE
11 MODELS FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; TO REQUIRE EACH SCHOOL RESOURCE
12 OFFICER TO ESTABLISH A YOUTH CRIME WATCH PROGRAM TO HELP YOUTH IN
13 THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE, DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AND GANG ACTIVITY
14 AND SMOKING CESSATION; TO DESCRIBE THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS
15 OF THE YOUTH CRIME WATCH PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE FOR THE
16 IMPLEMENTATION BY THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER OF A CONFLICT
17 RESOLUTION PROGRAM TO TEACH CHILDREN TO PEACEFULLY RESOLVE
18 CONFLICTS AND TO EFFECTIVELY DEAL WITH ANGER; TO PROVIDE FOR THE
19 IMPLEMENTATION OF A MENTORING GROUP FOR STUDENTS BETWEEN THE AGES
20 OF TEN AND FOURTEEN WITH ACADEMIC OR BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS; TO
21 REQUIRE STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL AND
22 COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND A PERFORMANCE GROUP; TO REQUIRE THE
23 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
24 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2005, AND TO RECOMMEND
25 TO THE LEGISLATURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSITION IN ALL
26 SCHOOL DISTRICTS OR ITS DISCONTINUATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

28 SECTION 1. (1) There is created as a pilot program within
29 the Department of Human Services the position of school resource
30 officer. The school resource officer shall be responsible for the
31 administration of various interdiction programs and the
32 coordination of local collaborative efforts for at-risk children
33 in the school district to which he is assigned by the department.

34 (2) The Department of Human Services shall implement the
35 position of school resource officer as a pilot program in selected
36 school districts in the state. Every school district that has
37 been placed on probation for failure to meet accreditation
38 standards since July 1, 1998, shall be included in the program.

39 The department shall designate the remainder of the districts for
40 participation in the pilot program by identifying those districts
41 most characterized by poor student performance, high incidents of
42 crime or delinquent acts. The pilot program shall exist until
43 July 1, 2005, at which time, based upon the recommendations of the
44 department, the position shall be permanently established in all
45 school districts or discontinued.

46 (3) The Department of Human Services shall establish the
47 minimum qualifications and annual salary for the position of
48 school resource officer. The school resource officer shall
49 maintain an office in the school district to which he is assigned
50 by the department. The department may authorize the employment of
51 any clerical or support personnel that may be necessary for the
52 administration of the office of the school resource officer.

53 (4) The school resource officer may use school buildings and
54 grounds within the school district for the holding of meetings and
55 gatherings of people in the performance of his duties.

56 SECTION 2. In order to provide students with an opportunity
57 to have direct personal contact with positive role models from
58 within the local community, the school resource officer shall
59 develop and implement a mentoring program that demonstrates the
60 accomplishments of local citizens. The mentoring program shall
61 coordinate the activities of school personnel, members of the
62 business community, civic leaders, law enforcement, churches and
63 other organizations to present various programs to student groups
64 and tutorial and guidance services to individual students.

65 SECTION 3. (1) Each school resource officer shall be
66 responsible for establishing a Youth Crime Watch Program in his
67 school district to help youth in the prevention of crime and
68 violence, alcohol and drug use and gang activity and smoking
69 cessation. The Youth Crime Watch Program shall be a school-based,
70 peer group organization comprised and under the leadership of
71 students. Through the program, students shall promote student
72 responsibility for a safe school environment through formal and
73 informal peer groups. In addition, the program shall focus on the
74 consequences of youth crime and what students can do to prevent
75 it. The school resource officer shall provide guidance to the

76 students in the formation of the program and shall be available,
77 upon the request of the students, to assist with the various
78 activities conducted through the program.

79 (2) In the Youth Crime Watch Program, a core group
80 consisting of an advisor, Youth Crime Watch representative,
81 students selected by the principal or staff and other program
82 participants shall be formed at each school. The core group
83 members shall serve as representatives of the program to all
84 students, who will be encouraged to participate in the program.
85 Activities and responsibilities of the group shall include
86 defining the school's needs and problems, promoting school spirit,
87 developing action plans and helping sponsor activities for
88 reducing campus crime, publicizing program successes and
89 increasing student involvement. The school resource officer shall
90 encourage the involvement of local businesses and law enforcement
91 officials to secure materials and guest speakers to further the
92 work of the Youth Crime Watch Program.

93 SECTION 4. The school resource officer shall develop and
94 implement in all schools in the district a formal conflict
95 resolution program designed to teach children to peacefully
96 resolve conflicts and to effectively deal with their anger. As
97 part of the program, students shall be taught how to resolve
98 disagreements nonviolently by working together to arrive at
99 mutually acceptable solutions. Students, teachers or parent
100 volunteers also may be trained to settle disputes among students.
101 In addition to offering conflict resolution skills, the program
102 shall seek to develop leadership and coping skills in students.
103 The program shall be a part of the curriculum of students at each
104 grade level.

105 SECTION 5. (1) The school resource officer shall establish
106 in each middle or junior high school in the district a school
107 mentoring group for students between the ages of ten (10) and
108 fourteen (14) with academic or behavioral problems. Through this

109 program, participants will have the opportunity to do homework for
110 several hours after school and to take part in group sessions
111 where the students have a safe outlet to discuss with their peers,
112 problems involving various aspects of their lives, including the
113 school or community, drug and alcohol use, child abuse, coping
114 with parental and other adult authorities, finances, gang
115 activity, emotional crises, peer pressure and health and legal
116 issues. Students will be trained to develop solutions to their
117 problems, including weighing what the consequences of different
118 actions in response to a particular problem might be.

119 (2) The mentoring program shall require students to
120 participate in school and community service projects. Through
121 these projects, students shall perform beneficial services for
122 their school or community through activities such as preparing
123 props for a school play or doing chores for the elderly. The
124 goals of the school and community service projects shall be to:

125 (a) Promote self-esteem, citizenship and other positive
126 qualities in participants;

127 (b) Enhance students' sense of empowerment as they make
128 a contribution to the community;

129 (c) Help students develop problem-solving, social and
130 employment skills;

131 (d) Foster interaction among students; and

132 (e) Provide students with opportunities to give help
133 and to receive help from their peers.

134 (3) Participants in the mentoring program also shall be
135 required to participate in a performance group. The performance
136 groups shall encourage students to recognize and develop their
137 talents and to enhance skills in self-discipline.

138 SECTION 6. Before January 1, 2005, the Department of Human
139 Services shall evaluate those school districts that have
140 participated in the pilot program to determine the effectiveness
141 of the school resource officer. The evaluation shall consider the

142 following factors:

143 (1) The improvement in academic performance of students in
144 the district;

145 (2) The degree to which youth crime and school violence has
146 decreased;

147 (3) The participation rate of students in the various
148 programs implemented and administered by the school resource
149 officer; and

150 (4) The opinions of school administrators, teachers, parents
151 and students in regard to the various programs implemented and
152 administered by the school resource officer.

153 The Department of Human Services shall prepare a report based
154 upon its evaluation of the pilot program. The report shall
155 contain a recommendation by the department to the Legislature that
156 the program be permanently implemented in all school districts or
157 discontinued.

158 SECTION 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from
159 and after July 1, 2000.