HOUSE BILL NO. 1732
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES OF THE TOWN OF SNOW LAKE SHORES TO CHARGE AND COLLECT FROM EACH HOMEOWNER AND BUSINESS OWNER OF THE TOWN A MONTHLY ASSESSMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FIRE PROTECTION AND OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN; TO AUTHORIZE THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ANY COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT IN BENTON COUNTY FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION AND OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN, AND TO USE ANY OF THE FUNDS RECEIVED FROM THE MONTHLY ASSESSMENT TO PAY THE COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR PROVIDING THOSE SERVICES; TO REQUIRE THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES TO HOLD A REFERENDUM ON THE QUESTION OF CHARGING THE ASSESSMENT BEFORE IT MAY BE CHARGED AND COLLECTED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (2), the governing authorities of the Town of Snow Lake Shores, Mississippi, in their discretion, are authorized to:

(a) Charge and collect from each homeowner and business owner in the town an assessment of not more than Five Dollars ($5.00) per month, which shall be used by the town for the purpose of providing fire protection and other emergency services for the residents of the town;

(b) Enter into an agreement with any county volunteer fire department in Benton County, Mississippi, for the fire department to provide fire protection and other emergency services for the residents of the town; and

(c) Use any of the funds received from the monthly assessment under paragraph (a) to pay the county volunteer fire department for providing fire protection and other emergency services for the residents of the town.

(2) Before the assessment authorized by this section may be
charged and collected, the governing authorities of the Town of Snow Lake Shores must adopt a resolution declaring their intention to charge the assessment, setting forth the amount of the assessment, providing that a referendum shall be held on the question of charging the assessment, and setting the date of the referendum. Notice of the governing authorities' intention to charge the assessment and notice of the referendum shall be published once a week for at least three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper published or having a general circulation in the town, with the first publication of the notice to be made not less than twenty-one (21) days before the date fixed in the resolution for the referendum and the last publication to be made not more than seven (7) days before that date. The referendum shall be conducted in the same manner as other elections are conducted in the town. At the referendum, all qualified electors of the town may vote, and the ballots used in the referendum shall have printed on them a brief statement of the amount and purposes of the proposed assessment and the words "FOR THE ASSESSMENT," and "AGAINST THE ASSESSMENT," and the voters shall vote by placing a cross (X) or check (V) opposite their choice on the proposition. The results of any such referendum shall be determined and certified by the election commission of the town, and if a majority of the qualified electors who vote in the referendum vote in favor of the assessment, then the town may charge and collect the assessment authorized in this section.

SECTION 2. The governing authorities of the Town of Snow Lake Shores shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor, or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the Attorney General of the United States or to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.