

By: Blackmon

To: Rules

SENATE BILL NO. 2311

1 AN ACT TO CREATE AND EMPOWER THE MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON  
2 THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

4 SECTION 1. (1) (a) There is hereby created the Mississippi  
5 Commission on the Economic Status of Women. The commission shall  
6 be composed of eleven (11) members to be appointed as follows:

7 (i) Six (6) members shall be appointed by the  
8 Governor; and

9 (ii) Five (5) members shall be appointed by the  
10 Lieutenant Governor.

11 (b) The members of the commission shall be women and  
12 men of recognized ability and achievement who are representative  
13 of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the population of this  
14 state. Members shall serve for terms of four (4) years each, and  
15 no member may serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms. All  
16 vacancies shall be filled by the appointing authority for the  
17 unexpired term.

18 (c) The commission shall elect a chairman, vice  
19 chairman and secretary from among its members for terms of two (2)  
20 years each, and any member is eligible for successive elections to  
21 office.

22           (d) A quorum for transacting business shall be a  
23 majority of the members of the commission.

24           (e) Members of the commission shall be reimbursed for  
25 expenses as provided in Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972,  
26 and shall receive per diem as provided in Section 25-3-69,  
27 Mississippi Code of 1972.

28           (f) The Lieutenant Governor shall notify the Governor  
29 after he has made his appointments, and the Governor shall then  
30 designate a place and time for the initial, organizational meeting  
31 of the commission.

32           (2) The commission shall have the powers and authority  
33 necessary to carry out the duties imposed upon it by this act,  
34 including, but not limited to, the following:

35           (a) To employ such administrative, technical and other  
36 personnel as may be necessary for the performance of its powers  
37 and duties;

38           (b) To hold hearings, make and sign any agreements, and  
39 do or perform any acts which may be necessary, desirable or proper  
40 to carry out the purposes of this act;

41           (c) To cooperate with any state agency, authority,  
42 board, commission, department or institution to facilitate its  
43 implementation of the powers and duties granted to the commission  
44 in this act; and each such state agency, authority, board,  
45 commission, department or institution shall cooperate with the  
46 commission in the performance of its duties;

47           (d) To appoint advisers or advisory committees from  
48 time to time when the commission determines that the experience or  
49 expertise of such advisers or advisory committees is needed for  
50 projects of the commission; and

51           (e) To apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts and  
52 services from the state, the government of the United States or

53 any of its agencies, or any other public or private source, for  
54 the purpose of defraying clerical and administrative costs as may  
55 be necessary in carrying out its duties under this act.

56 (3) (a) The commission shall study, but not be limited to,  
57 the following areas:

58 (i) Women's educational and employment problems,  
59 needs and opportunities;

60 (ii) The socioeconomic factors that influence the  
61 economic status of women;

62 (iii) The development of individual potential;

63 (iv) State laws in regard to the civil, economic  
64 and political rights of women, including pensions, tax  
65 requirements, property rights, marriage and dissolution of  
66 marriage provisions, and similar matters;

67 (v) The effect of social attitudes and pressures  
68 and economic considerations in shaping the roles to be assumed by  
69 women in the society; and

70 (vi) Any laws, practices or conditions concerning  
71 or affecting women which impose special limitations or burdens  
72 upon them or upon society, or which limit or tend to limit  
73 economic opportunities available to women.

74 (b) The commission shall act as an information center  
75 on the economic status of women and women's educational,  
76 employment and other related needs.

77 (c) The commission shall recommend, develop, prepare or  
78 coordinate materials, projects or other activities and shall give  
79 technical and consultative advice to public or private groups or  
80 persons concerned with any of the following:

81                   (i) Preventing or minimizing problems brought  
82 about by the changing roles and responsibilities of women; and

83                   (ii) Developing programs to encourage and enable  
84 women to be fully contributing members of society.

85                   (d) The commission may encourage women's organizations  
86 and other groups to institute local self-help activities designed  
87 to meet women's educational, employment and related needs.

88                   (4) The commission shall make a report to the Legislature at  
89 the close of each fiscal year on its activities, findings and  
90 recommendations.

91                   SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
92 and after July 1, 1999.