

By: Mettetal

To: Public Health and  
Welfare;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 3065

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE TASK FORCE TO  
2 MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF EXISTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE  
3 IN MISSISSIPPI, EXAMINE AND STUDY APPROACHES TAKEN IN OTHER STATES  
4 TO HELP MAKE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS MORE AFFORDABLE, AND MAKE  
5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS BY THE LEGISLATURE AND EXECUTIVE  
6 BRANCH AGENCIES TO MAKE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS MORE AFFORDABLE FOR  
7 RESIDENTS OF MISSISSIPPI; TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE  
8 TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL MAKE A REPORT OF  
9 ITS WORK TO THE LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR BEFORE DECEMBER 15,  
10 2000; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL BE ASSIGNED TO THE  
11 DIVISION OF MEDICAID FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY, AND THE  
12 DIVISION SHALL DESIGNATE STAFF TO ASSIST THE TASK FORCE; AND FOR  
13 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 SECTION 1. (1) There is created the Prescription Drug  
16 Coverage Task Force, which shall be composed of thirteen (13)  
17 members as follows:

18 (a) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Public Health  
19 and Welfare Committee of the Senate;

20 (b) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Public Health  
21 and Welfare Committee of the House of Representatives;

22 (c) One (1) member of the Senate appointed by the  
23 Lieutenant Governor;

24 (d) One (1) member of the House of Representatives  
25 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

26 (e) The Executive Director of the Division of Medicaid;

27 (f) The Commissioner of Insurance;

28 (g) Two (2) persons who are representatives of the  
29 pharmaceutical manufacturing industry, to be appointed by the  
30 Governor;

31 (h) One (1) person who is a pharmacist licensed in

32 Mississippi, to be appointed by the Governor; and

33 (i) Two (2) other persons appointed by the Governor.

34 (2) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a  
35 chairman and vice chairman from its membership, and shall adopt  
36 rules for transacting its business and keeping records. Members  
37 of the task force shall receive a per diem in the amount provided  
38 in Section 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the  
39 task force. Members of the task force other than the legislative  
40 members shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred  
41 while engaged in official business of the task force in accordance  
42 with Section 25-3-41, and the legislative members of the task  
43 force shall receive the expense allowance provided for in Section  
44 5-1-47.

45 (3) The duties of the task force shall be to:

46 (a) Make a comprehensive study of prescription drug  
47 coverage in Mississippi, examining existing coverage under health  
48 insurance plans and government programs such as Medicaid and  
49 Medicare; the problems that residents of Mississippi have in  
50 obtaining necessary prescription drugs at affordable prices; and  
51 the number and demographics of those residents of Mississippi who  
52 are unable to obtain necessary prescription drugs because of their  
53 high cost;

54 (b) Examine and study approaches taken by other states  
55 to help make prescription drugs more affordable for the elderly  
56 and other persons, specifically the program in Maine, which  
57 provides discounts on drugs to residents who lack coverage; the  
58 program in California, which requires pharmacies participating in  
59 Medicaid to supply the same discounts to Medicare beneficiaries;  
60 and the program in Texas, which provides for voluntary drug  
61 rebates to be passed on to residents enrolled in certain programs;  
62 and

63 (c) Make recommendations for actions by the Legislature  
64 and executive branch agencies to make prescription drugs more

65 affordable for residents of Mississippi.

66 (4) Before December 15, 2000, the task force shall make a  
67 report of its work and shall submit a copy of the report to the  
68 Legislature and the Governor.

69 (5) The task force shall be assigned to the Division of  
70 Medicaid for administrative purposes only, and the division shall  
71 designate staff to assist the task force. The task force may  
72 solicit grants, donations and other funds, and may accept and  
73 expend any funds that are made available to the task force to  
74 carry out its purpose.

75 (6) All agencies, departments, offices and institutions of  
76 the state, including the state universities and the community and  
77 junior colleges, shall cooperate with the task force with such  
78 assistance as requested by the task force.

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