

By: Farris

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 593

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC
2 DEFENDERS SYSTEM TASK FORCE TO MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE
3 EXISTING PUBLIC DEFENDER LAW IN MISSISSIPPI; TO EXAMINE AND STUDY
4 APPROACHES TAKEN IN OTHER STATES REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND
5 COST OF STATEWIDE PUBLIC DEFENDER SYSTEMS; TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS
6 FOR ACTION BY THE LEGISLATURE TO STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
7 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT PUBLIC DEFENDERS AND CIRCUIT JUDGES;
8 TO ANALYZE DISTRICT NEEDS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPENSATION OF THE
9 TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE TASK FORCE SHALL MAKE A REPORT OF
10 ITS WORK; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
12 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN,

13 (1) There is created the Mississippi Public Defender Task
14 Force which shall be composed of eleven (11) members as follows:

15 (a) The President of the Mississippi Public Defender
16 Association, or his designee;

17 (b) The President of the Mississippi Prosecutors
18 Association, or his designee;

19 (c) A representative of the Administrative Office of
20 Courts;

21 (d) A representative of the Mississippi Supreme Court;

22 (e) A representative of the Conference of Circuit
23 Judges;

24 (f) A representative of the Mississippi Attorney
25 General's Office;

26 (g) A representative of the Mississippi Association of
27 Supervisors;

28 (h) The Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, or
29 his designee;

30 (i) The Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, or

31 his designee;

32 (j) The Chairman of the House Judiciary En Banc
33 Committee, or his designee;

34 (k) The Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee,
35 or his designee.

36 (2) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a
37 chairman and vice chairman from its membership and shall adopt
38 rules for transacting its business and keeping records. Members
39 of the task force shall receive a per diem in the amount provided
40 in Section 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the
41 task force. Members of the task force other than the legislative
42 members shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred
43 while engaged in official business of the task force in accordance
44 with Section 25-3-41 and the legislative members of the task force
45 shall receive the expense allowance provided for in Section
46 5-1-47.

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

48 (a) Make a comprehensive study of the needs by circuit
49 court districts for state-supported indigent defense counsel,
50 examining existing public defender programs. This report shall be
51 provided to the Legislature by July 1, 2001.

52 (b) Examine and study approaches taken by other states
53 in the implementation and costs of state-supported indigent
54 criminal cases.

55 (c) To study the relationship between presiding circuit
56 court judges and the appointment of criminal indigent defense
57 counsel.