HOUSE BILL NO. 60

AN ACT TO REQUIRE HOME SCHOOLED CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN
THE UNIFORM STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT TESTING PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE LOCAL
SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF THE TESTING REQUIREMENT TO
PARENTS OF SUCH CHILDREN WHOSE GRADE LEVEL IS BEING TESTED DURING
THAT SCHOOL YEAR AND TO ACCOMMODATE HOME SCHOOLED CHILDREN DURING
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TESTS; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A LIST OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS THAT MAY BE
TAKEN BY HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS IN LIEU OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN
THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection
(4) of this section, beginning with the 2001-2002 school year,
each compulsory-school-age child who is being educated in a home
instruction program shall participate in the uniform statewide
assessment testing program required under Section 37-16-3 in order
to verify that the student is performing at or above the minimum
performance standards approved by the State Board of Education for
the student's appropriate grade level. For the purposes of this
section, "appropriate grade level" means the grade in which public
school students typically are enrolled when such students are the
same age as the child in the home instruction program and not the
grade level at which the child in the home instruction program
purportedly is performing.

(2) Each local school district shall provide notice of the
testing requirement established under this section to the parent,
guardian or custodian of each compulsory-school-age child in a
home instruction program who is the same age as the students
typically enrolled in a grade in which the uniform tests are being
administered during that school year. To assist the school
district in providing this notice, before September 30 of each
year, the school attendance officer shall provide a copy of the
certificate of enrollment for each compulsory-school-age child in
a home instruction program residing in the school district to the
school district superintendent. Based upon the age of the child
as reflected on the certificate of enrollment, the school district
promptly shall notify, in writing, the appropriate parents,
guardians and custodians of the testing requirements, the dates
and times that the tests will be administered in the school
district and the location to which a child in a home instruction
program must report to participate in the test. The notice also
must include a listing of those tests or assessment instruments
that the State Board of Education recognizes as alternative means
to verify that the student is performing at or above the minimum
performance standards approved by the State Board of Education for
the student's appropriate grade level.

(3) School districts shall provide appropriate
accommodations for the participation of the compulsory-school-age
children in home instruction programs in the uniform statewide
assessment testing program.

(4) The State Board of Education shall adopt a list of tests
and assessment instruments that the board recognizes as valid,
alternative means to establish the performance level of a student
in a home instruction program. A parent, guardian or custodian of
a compulsory-school-age child in a home instruction program may
submit documentation of the child's results on these tests or
assessments to the local school board in lieu of the child
participating in the statewide assessment program.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2001.