

By: Representative Fleming

To: Judiciary En Banc

HOUSE BILL NO. 317

1 AN ACT TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY ON JANUARY 1, 2010, AND  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT NO SENTENCE OF DEATH SHALL BE IMPOSED ON OR AFTER  
3 JANUARY 1, 2002; TO AMEND SECTIONS 97-3-21, 99-19-101 AND  
4 99-35-135, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO, TO  
5 REPEAL SECTIONS 99-19-49, 99-19-51, 99-19-53, 99-19-55, 99-19-57,  
6 99-19-103 AND 99-19-105, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE  
7 FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE DEATH SENTENCE, INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING  
8 THE DEATH PENALTY AND JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THE DEATH PENALTY; AND  
9 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11 SECTION 1. The death penalty shall stand abolished on  
12 January 1, 2010. No sentence of death shall be imposed on or  
13 after January 1, 2002. Any person who is under penalty of death  
14 on January 1, 2010, shall have that sentence reduced to life  
15 without parole.

16 SECTION 2. Section 97-3-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
17 amended as follows:

18 97-3-21. Every person who shall be convicted of murder shall  
19 be sentenced by the court to imprisonment for life in the State  
20 Penitentiary.

21 Every person who shall be convicted of capital murder shall  
22 be sentenced (a) \* \* \* to imprisonment for life in the State  
23 Penitentiary without parole; or (b) to imprisonment for life in  
24 the State Penitentiary with eligibility for parole as provided in  
25 Section 47-7-3(1)(f).

26 SECTION 3. Section 99-19-101, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
27 amended as follows:

28 99-19-101. (1) Upon conviction or adjudication of guilt of  
29 a defendant of capital murder or other capital offense, the court  
30 shall conduct a separate sentencing proceeding to determine



31 whether the defendant should be sentenced to \* \* \* life  
32 imprisonment without eligibility for parole or life imprisonment.  
33 The proceeding shall be conducted by the trial judge before the  
34 trial jury as soon as practicable. If, through impossibility or  
35 inability, the trial jury is unable to reconvene for a hearing on  
36 the issue of penalty, having determined the guilt of the accused,  
37 the trial judge may summon a jury to determine the issue of the  
38 imposition of the penalty. If the trial jury has been waived, or  
39 if the defendant pleaded guilty, the sentencing proceeding shall  
40 be conducted before a jury impaneled for that purpose or may be  
41 conducted before the trial judge sitting without a jury if both  
42 the State of Mississippi and the defendant agree thereto in  
43 writing. In the proceeding, evidence may be presented as to any  
44 matter that the court deems relevant to sentence \* \* \*. However,  
45 this subsection shall not be construed to authorize the  
46 introduction of any evidence secured in violation of the  
47 Constitution of the United States or of the State of  
48 Mississippi. \* \* \*

49 \* \* \*

50 SECTION 4. Section 99-35-135, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
51 amended as follows:

52 99-35-135. \* \* \* If the sentence be for confinement in the  
53 penitentiary, and the defendant be not present, but in custody,  
54 the Clerk of the Supreme Court shall forthwith notify the legal  
55 authorities of the penitentiary as in cases of conviction for  
56 penitentiary offenses in the circuit court, who shall send for the  
57 convict as provided in such cases.

58 SECTION 5. Sections 99-19-49, 99-19-51, 99-19-53, 99-19-55  
59 and 99-19-57, Mississippi Code of 1972, which provide for the  
60 execution of the death sentence, are repealed.

61 SECTION 6. Section 99-19-103 and 99-19-105, Mississippi Code  
62 of 1972, which provide for instructions regarding the death  
63 penalty and judicial review of the death penalty are repealed.



64 SECTION 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
65 and after January 1, 2002.

