

By: Representatives Clark, Montgomery (15th) To: Education

## HOUSE BILL NO. 396

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO AWARD  
2 HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS AND HONORARY EIGHTH GRADE CERTIFICATES OF  
3 COMPLETION TO WORLD WAR II AND KOREAN CONFLICT VETERANS WHO WERE  
4 UNABLE TO COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION DUE TO THEIR MILITARY SERVICE;  
5 TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A UNIFORM  
6 APPLICATION FOR THE DIPLOMA AND CERTIFICATE; TO ENCOURAGE THE  
7 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE RECOGNITION IN  
8 AWARDING DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES TO VETERANS; AND FOR RELATED  
9 PURPOSES.

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

11 SECTION 1. (1) The State Board of Education may award a  
12 standard high school diploma in the form prescribed by the board  
13 to veterans of World War II and the Korean Conflict who were  
14 unable to complete their high school curriculum due to their  
15 military service. The diploma is available to any honorably  
16 discharged veteran residing in Mississippi who, as a ninth, tenth,  
17 eleventh or twelfth grade student, was scheduled to graduate  
18 between 1941 and 1955 but was inducted into military service  
19 before completing the necessary graduation requirements. Family  
20 members of deceased eligible veterans may apply for the diploma to  
21 be awarded posthumously.

22 (2) (a) The State Board of Education may award an honorary  
23 eighth grade certificate of completion to veterans of World War II  
24 and the Korean Conflict who were unable to complete their primary  
25 school curriculum due to their military service. The certificate  
26 is available to any honorably discharged veteran residing in  
27 Mississippi who, as a student in a grade lower than the ninth  
28 grade, was inducted into military service before completing the

29 veteran's primary education. Family members of deceased eligible  
30 veterans may apply for the certificate to be awarded posthumously.

31 (b) The State Board of Education shall design an  
32 honorary eighth grade certificate of completion specifically for  
33 veterans who are eligible for the certificate under this section.

34 (3) The State Board of Education shall develop a uniform  
35 application for persons seeking a diploma under subsection (1) or  
36 an honorary eighth grade certificate of completion under  
37 subsection (2) of this section. The application shall request no  
38 less than the following information:

39 (a) The veteran's name, social security number and date  
40 of birth;

41 (b) The last year the veteran was in school and the  
42 veteran's grade level during that year;

43 (c) The year the veteran left school to enter World War  
44 II or the Korean Conflict;

45 (d) The year the veteran would have graduated from high  
46 school;

47 (e) The name and location of the school attended;

48 (f) The date of the veteran's enlistment or draft;

49 (g) The veteran's service number;

50 (h) The veteran's date of honorable discharge;

51 (i) A copy of the veteran's DD-214 form, if available;

52 and

53 (j) Any other information deemed relevant by the State  
54 Board of Education.

55 The State Board of Education shall provide the State Veterans  
56 Affairs Board, local school districts and county departments of  
57 human services with copies of the uniform application.

58 (3) A person may request an application from a local school  
59 district, any county department of human services, the State  
60 Department of Education or the State Veterans Affairs Board.  
61 Completed applications for a diploma or certificate may be

62 submitted to the State Board of Education. Upon verifying the  
63 information contained in the application, including verifying the  
64 veteran's military service information with the State Veterans  
65 Affairs Board, and determining the veteran's eligibility for  
66 either the standard high school diploma or honorary eighth grade  
67 certificate of completion, the State Board of Education may award  
68 the diploma or certificate to the veteran.

69 (4) The State Board of Education is encouraged to provide  
70 appropriate recognition, which may include special ceremonies, to  
71 veterans who are awarded high school diplomas or eighth grade  
72 certificates of completion under this section.

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