HOUSE BILL NO. 496

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-83, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PLACE VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS IN EVERY CLASSROOM AND ON EVERY SCHOOL BUS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-3-83, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-3-83. (1) There is established within the State Department of Education a school violence prevention grant program, available to all eligible public school districts, to assist in financing programs to fight school violence.

(2) Subject to the extent of appropriations available, the school violence prevention grant program shall offer any of the following specific preventive services and other additional services appropriate to school violence prevention:

(a) Metal detectors;

(b) Video surveillance cameras and monitoring equipment for classrooms ** ** and school buses, as required under subsection (4) of this section;

(c) Crisis management/action teams for the purpose of responding to school violence; and

(d) Violence prevention training, conflict resolution training and other appropriate training designated by the State Department of Education for faculty and staff.

(3) Each local school district in this state may ** apply annually for up to Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00) in school violence prevention grant funds, subject to the extent of appropriations specifically therefor by the Legislature. In order
to be eligible for such program, each local school board desiring
to participate shall apply to the State Department of Education by
May 31 before the beginning of the applicable fiscal year on forms
provided by the department, and shall be required to establish a
local school Violence Task Force to involve members of the
community in the school violence prevention effort. The State
Department of Education shall determine by July 1 of each
succeeding fiscal year which local school districts have
submitted * * * applications for school violence prevention grants
which have been approved by the department.

(4) Before July 1, 2002, each local school district shall
install video surveillance camera equipment in every classroom and
on every school bus for the purpose of monitoring school
disciplinary problems. A school district may use school violence
prevention grant funds or any other available funds for the
purchase of video surveillance camera equipment and monitoring
equipment.

(5) The State Department of Education shall research the
effectiveness of using video surveillance camera equipment in the
classroom and on school buses. The department shall address the
following issues:

(a) The effectiveness of video cameras in the classroom
and on school buses in reducing student disciplinary problems;

(b) The effectiveness of teachers and bus drivers using
the cameras to present clear and convincing evidence of a
student's disruptive behavior to the student, the principal, the
superintendent and the student's parents; and

(c) The effectiveness of teachers using the cameras to
review teaching performance and receive diagnostic feedback for
developmental purposes.

The results of the department's research shall be reported in
a study to the Chairmen of the Education Committees in the House
of Representatives and Senate by January 1, 2003.
SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.