HOUSE BILL NO. 537

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 45-6-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REVISE PHYSICAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT
3 OFFICERS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 45-6-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
6 amended as follows:

7 45-6-11. (1) Law enforcement officers already serving under
8 permanent appointment on July 1, 1981, and personnel of the
9 division of community services under Section 47-7-9, Mississippi
10 Code of 1972, serving on July 1, 1994, shall not be required to
11 meet any requirement of subsections (3) and (4) of this section as
12 a condition of continued employment; nor shall failure of any such
13 law enforcement officer to fulfill such requirements make that
14 person ineligible for any promotional examination for which that
15 person is otherwise eligible. Provided, however, if any law
16 enforcement officer certified under the provisions of this chapter
17 leaves his employment as such and does not become employed as a
18 law enforcement officer within two (2) years from the date of
19 termination of his prior employment, he shall be required to
20 comply with board policy as to rehiring standards in order to be
21 employed as a law enforcement officer; except, that, if any law
22 enforcement officer certified under this chapter leaves his
23 employment as such to serve as a sheriff, he may be employed as a
24 law enforcement officer after he has completed his service as a
25 sheriff without being required to comply with board policy as to
26 rehiring standards. Part-time law enforcement officers serving on
or before July 1, 1998, shall have until July 1, 2001, to obtain certification as a part-time officer.

(2) Any person who has twenty (20) years of law enforcement experience and who is eligible to be certified under this section shall be eligible for recertification after leaving law enforcement on the same basis as someone who has taken the basic training course. Application to the board to qualify under this subsection shall be made no later than June 30, 1993.

(3) (a) No person shall be appointed or employed as a law enforcement officer or a part-time law enforcement officer unless that person has been certified as being qualified under the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

(b) No person shall be appointed or employed as a law enforcement trainee by any law enforcement unit for a period to exceed two (2) years. The prohibition against the appointment or employment of a law enforcement trainee for a period not to exceed two (2) years may not be nullified by terminating the appointment or employment of such a person before the expiration of the time period and then rehiring the person for another period. Any person, who, due to illness or other events beyond his control, could not attend the required school or training as scheduled, may serve with full pay and benefits in such a capacity until he can attend the required school or training.

(c) No person shall serve as a law enforcement officer in any full-time, part-time, reserve or auxiliary capacity during a period when that person's certification has been suspended, cancelled or recalled pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(4) In addition to the requirements of subsections (3), (7) and (8) of this section, the board, by rules and regulations consistent with other provisions of law, shall fix other qualifications for the employment of law enforcement officers, including minimum age, education, physical and mental standards, citizenship, good moral character, experience and such other
matters as relate to the competence and reliability of persons to
assume and discharge the responsibilities of law enforcement
officers, and the board shall prescribe the means for presenting
evidence of fulfillment of these requirements. Additionally, the
board shall fix qualifications for the appointment or employment
of part-time law enforcement officers to essentially the same
standards and requirements as law enforcement officers. The board
shall develop and implement a part-time law enforcement officer
training program that meets the same performance objectives and
has essentially the same or similar content as the programs
approved by the board for full-time law enforcement officers and
the board shall provide that such training shall be available
locally and held at times convenient to the persons required to
receive such training.

(5) Any elected sheriff, constable, deputy or chief of
county or police may apply for certification. Such certification shall be
granted at the request of the elected official after providing
evidence of satisfaction of the requirements of subsections (3)
and (4) of this section. Certification granted to such elected
officials shall be granted under the same standards and conditions
as established by law enforcement officers and shall be subject to
recall as in subsection (7) of this section.

(6) The board shall issue a certificate evidencing
satisfaction of the requirements of subsections (3) and (4) of
this section to any applicant who presents such evidence as may be
required by its rules and regulations of satisfactory completion
of a program or course of instruction in another jurisdiction
equivalent in content and quality to that required by the board
for approved law enforcement officer education and training
programs in this state, and has satisfactorily passed any and all
diagnostic testing and evaluation as required by the board to
ensure competency.
(7) Professional certificates remain the property of the board, and the board reserves the right to either reprimand the holder of a certificate, suspend a certificate upon conditions imposed by the board, or cancel and recall any certificate when:

(a) The certificate was issued by administrative error;

(b) The certificate was obtained through misrepresentation or fraud;

(c) The holder has been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude;

(d) The holder has been convicted of a felony; or

(e) Other due cause as determined by the board.

(8) When the board believes there is a reasonable basis for either the reprimand, suspension, cancellation of, or recalling the certification of a law enforcement officer or a part-time law enforcement officer, notice and opportunity for a hearing shall be provided in accordance with law prior to such reprimand, suspension or revocation.

(9) Any full- or part-time law enforcement officer aggrieved by the findings and order of the board may file an appeal with the chancery court of the county in which such person is employed from the final order of the board. Such appeals must be filed within thirty (30) days of the final order of the board.

(10) Any full- or part-time law enforcement officer whose certification has been cancelled pursuant to this chapter may reapply for certification, but not sooner than two (2) years after the date on which the order of the board canceling such certification becomes final.

(11) A person who does not complete the physical training required may, in lieu of such physical training requirements, participate in a board approved physical training program not less than once a week for a minimum of six (6) months. This shall satisfy the physical training requirement for certification.
SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.