HOUSE BILL NO. 673

AN ACT TO CREATE THE "RURAL COUNTY AMBULANCE SERVICE GRANT FUND," WHICH SHALL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING GRANTS FROM THE FUND TO COUNTIES WITH A POPULATION OF NOT MORE THAN 15,000 AND WITHOUT A COUNTY HOSPITAL, WHICH SHALL BE USED FOR CONTRACTING FOR ADEQUATE AMBULANCE SERVICE IN THE COUNTY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE GRANT FUND WILL CONSIST OF FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE LEGISLATURE FROM THE HEALTH CARE EXPENDABLE FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. As used in this act, the following words shall have the meanings ascribed in this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Department" means the Mississippi Development Authority.

(b) "Fund" means the Rural County Ambulance Service Grant Fund.

(c) "Rural county" means a county that has a population of not more than fifteen thousand (15,000), according to the most recent federal decennial census, and that does not have a county-owned hospital.

SECTION 2. (1) There is created a special fund in the State Treasury to be designated the "Rural County Ambulance Service Grant Fund," which shall be administered by the department. The department shall establish and implement a program for the purpose of making grants from the fund to rural counties, which shall be used to supplement existing county funds for contracting for adequate ambulance service in the county. The fund shall consist of not less than Six Hundred Thousand Dollars ($600,000.00) appropriated annually by the Legislature from the Health Care
Expendable Fund established under Section 43-13-407. Unexpended amounts remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund. Any interest earned or investment earnings on amounts in the fund shall be deposited into the fund.

(2) The department shall make the grants from the fund available to the counties through the planning and development districts. Any county that is eligible for a grant from the fund shall apply for the grant through the planning and development district in which the county is located. The maximum amount of any one (1) grant that may be made to a county is One Hundred Thousand Dollars ($100,000.00).

(3) The department shall have all powers necessary to implement and administer the program provided for in this section, and the department shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation and administration of the program.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.