AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A SALARY SCALE BASED UPON YEARS OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE FOR LEGAL ASSISTANTS FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEYS; TO AMEND SECTION 25-3-35, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; TO BRING FORWARD SECTIONS 25-31-5, 25-31-6, 25-31-33 AND 25-31-39, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS AND PRESCRIBE THEIR POWERS AND DUTIES AND SUPPLEMENTAL COMPENSATION IN CERTAIN COUNTIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) The annual salary of full-time legal assistants who have practiced law actively for less than two (2) years shall be not less than Twenty-five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) nor more than Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00), as established by the district attorney. The Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00) maximum shall not apply to any legal assistant who has practiced law actively for less than two (2) years and whose salary is in excess of Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00) before July 1, 2001.

(2) The annual salary of full-time legal assistants who have practiced law actively for more than two (2) years, but less than six (6) years, shall not exceed Sixty-seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($67,500.00), as established by the district attorney.

(3) The annual salary of full-time legal assistants who have practiced law actively for more than six (6) years, but less than ten (10) years, shall not exceed Seventy-five Thousand Dollars ($75,000.00), as established by the district attorney.

(4) The annual salary of full-time legal assistants who have practiced law actively in excess of ten (10) years may be increased, in the discretion of the district attorney, One
Section 2. Section 25-3-35, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

25-3-35. (1) The annual salaries of the following judges are fixed as follows, to begin at the commencement of the next term of office immediately succeeding the existing term:

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court................. $104,900.00
Presiding Justice of the Supreme Court............ 102,900.00
Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, each..... 102,300.00

However, in addition to their present official duties, there are imposed upon the Supreme Court Justices the extra duties of making a special study of existing laws and reporting to each regular session of the Legislature such constructive suggestions as they may deem necessary for the improvement of the administration of justice, and of advising and counseling with the State Librarian in the selection of law books for purchase and use in the State Law Library, advising with the librarian thereof upon the removal from the library of any books which may be the least frequently used, and for the placing of same in a convenient location so as to provide additional space for such books and other current publications which may be more frequently used or called for. For such extra services each justice, from and after June 17, 1999, shall receive a sum sufficient when added to the present salaries of the justices to aggregate One Hundred Four Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars ($104,900.00) for the Chief Justice, One Hundred Two Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars ($102,900.00) for the Presiding Justice, and One Hundred Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars ($102,300.00) for Associate Justices, per annum. As each existing term expires and the above-captioned salaries become
effective in due course, the extra duties and compensation provided for shall cease.

(2) The annual salaries of the judges of the Court of Appeals of Mississippi are fixed as follows:

Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals.............. $ 98,300.00
Associate Judges of the Court of Appeals, each..... 95,500.00

(3) The annual salaries of the chancery and circuit court judges are fixed as follows:

Chancery Judges, each............................. $94,700.00
Circuit Judges, each............................... 94,700.00

In addition to their present official duties, there are imposed upon the chancery and circuit court judges the extra duties of making a special study of existing laws relating to trial courts and reporting to the Supreme Court of the State of Mississippi such constructive suggestions as they may deem necessary for the improvement of the administration of justice, which shall be recommended to the Legislature by the Supreme Court in the manner provided by law. The judges shall advise and supervise in the purchase of law books for the libraries of each district, and shall study and evaluate the inventory of books and facilities now existing in the libraries of each district to effect the removal and relocation of obsolete publications so as to provide additional space for those books and current publications more frequently used. The judges shall study the existing rules promulgated by the circuit and chancery court judicial associations governing the operation of chancery and circuit courts, and revise the same pursuant to existing laws.

For such extra services each judge, from and after June 17, 1999, shall receive a sum sufficient when added to the present salaries of the judges to aggregate Ninety-four Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars ($94,700.00) per annum for each judge. Upon the expiration of the existing term, the above-captioned salaries
become effective in due course, and the extra duties and
compensation provided for shall cease.

(4) The Supreme Court shall prepare a payroll for chancery
judges and circuit judges and submit such payroll to the
Department of Finance and Administration.

(5) The annual salary of the full-time district attorneys
shall be Seventy-nine Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Dollars
($79,830.00).

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SECTION 3. Section 25-31-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
brought forward as follows:

25-31-5. (1) The following number of full-time legal
assistants are authorized in the following circuit court
districts:

(a) First Circuit Court District.............. seven (7)
legal assistants.
(b) Second Circuit Court District........... nine (9)
legal assistants.
(c) Third Circuit Court District............. four (4)
legal assistants.
(d) Fourth Circuit Court District........... five (5)
legal assistants.
(e) Fifth Circuit Court District............. four (4)
legal assistants.
(f) Sixth Circuit Court District............ two (2)
legal assistants.
(g) Seventh Circuit Court District.......... nine (9)
legal assistants.
(h) Eighth Circuit Court District.......... two (2)
legal assistants.
(i) Ninth Circuit Court District.......... two (2)
legal assistants.
(j) Tenth Circuit Court District........... four (4)
(k) Eleventh Circuit Court District........... five (5) legal assistants.

(l) Twelfth Circuit Court District........... three (3) legal assistants.

(m) Thirteenth Circuit Court District......... two (2) legal assistants.

(n) Fourteenth Circuit Court District........ three (3) legal assistants.

(o) Fifteenth Circuit Court District......... four (4) legal assistants.

(p) Sixteenth Circuit Court District........... four (4) legal assistants.

(q) Seventeenth Circuit Court District........ five (5) legal assistants.

(r) Eighteenth Circuit Court District.......... two (2) legal assistants.

(s) Nineteenth Circuit Court District......... four (4) legal assistants.

(t) Twentieth Circuit Court District.......... four (4) legal assistants.

(u) Twenty-first Circuit Court District....... two (2) legal assistants.

(v) Twenty-second Circuit Court District...... two (2) legal assistants.

(2) In addition to any legal assistants authorized pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the following number of full-time legal assistants are authorized (i) in the following circuit court districts if funds are appropriated by the Legislature to adequately fund the salaries, expenses and fringe benefits of such legal assistants, or (ii) in any of the following circuit court districts in which the board of supervisors of one or more of the counties in a circuit court district adopts a
resolution to pay all of the salaries, supplemental pay, expenses and fringe benefits of legal assistants authorized in such district pursuant to this subsection:

(a) First Circuit Court District................. two (2) legal assistants.
(b) Second Circuit Court District................. two (2) legal assistants.
(c) Third Circuit Court District................. two (2) legal assistants.
(d) Fourth Circuit Court District............... two (2) legal assistants.
(e) Fifth Circuit Court District................ two (2) legal assistants.
(f) Sixth Circuit Court District............... two (2) legal assistants.
(g) Seventh Circuit Court District............. two (2) legal assistants.
(h) Eighth Circuit Court District.............. two (2) legal assistants.
(i) Ninth Circuit Court District............... two (2) legal assistants.
(j) Tenth Circuit Court District.............. two (2) legal assistants.
(k) Eleventh Circuit Court District........... two (2) legal assistants.
(l) Twelfth Circuit Court District............ two (2) legal assistants.
(m) Thirteenth Circuit Court District......... two (2) legal assistants.
(n) Fourteenth Circuit Court District........ two (2) legal assistants.
(o) Fifteenth Circuit Court District......... two (2) legal assistants.
(p) Sixteenth Circuit Court District.......... two (2) legal assistants.

(q) Seventeenth Circuit Court District......... two (2) legal assistants.

(r) Eighteenth Circuit Court District.......... two (2) legal assistants.

(s) Nineteenth Circuit Court District.......... two (2) legal assistants.

(t) Twentieth Circuit Court District.......... two (2) legal assistants.

(u) Twenty-first Circuit Court District....... two (2) legal assistants.

(v) Twenty-second Circuit Court District....... two (2) legal assistants.

(3) The board of supervisors of any county may pay all or a part of the salary, supplemental pay, expenses and fringe benefits of any district attorney or legal assistant authorized in the circuit court district to which such county belongs pursuant to this section.

SECTION 4. Section 25-31-6, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:

25-31-6. Legal assistants to district attorneys shall be regularly licensed and practicing attorneys having been duly admitted to practice before the supreme court of the State of Mississippi, and shall have the power and authority, under the direction and supervision of the district attorney, to perform all of the duties required of that office. Said legal assistants may be removed at the discretion of the duly elected and acting district attorney, or for cause by the senior circuit judge of the district.

SECTION 5. Section 25-31-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is brought forward as follows:
225 25-31-33. The board of supervisors of any county having a
226 population in excess of two hundred thousand (200,000) according
227 to the federal decennial census of 1970 shall contribute a sum
228 equal to Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars ($4,500.00) per year,
229 payable monthly, to supplement the salary of the district attorney
230 of that county, provided that he serves full time; and shall
231 contribute a sum equal to Three Thousand Dollars ($3,000.00) per
232 year, payable monthly, per full-time legal assistant to supplement
233 the salary of each full-time legal assistant to the district
234 attorney of that county.
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236 The board of supervisors of any Class 1 county bordering on
237 the Gulf of Mexico and having two (2) judicial districts shall
238 contribute a sum equal to Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars
239 ($4,500.00) per year, payable monthly, to supplement the salary of
240 the district attorney of that county provided that he serves full
241 time; and shall contribute a sum equal to Five Thousand Dollars
242 ($5,000.00) per year, payable monthly, to supplement the salary of
243 each full-time legal assistant to the district attorney of that
244 county.

SECTION 6. Section 25-31-39, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
brought forward as follows:

25-31-39. There shall be no part-time district attorneys or
part-time legal assistants to district attorneys; however, any
person not serving as a legal assistant to the district attorney
who is appointed by the Governor to serve as district attorney to
fill a vacancy occurring in such office until such office shall be
filled by a special or regular election as provided by Sections
the private practice of law while holding the office of district
attorney pursuant to such appointment.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2001.