HOUSE BILL NO. 1448
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT RELATING TO THE JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (JROTC) PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO EMPLOY OR CONTRACT WITH THE MISSISSIPPI MILITARY DEPARTMENT FOR A STATEWIDE COORDINATOR FOR JROTC PROGRAMS AND TO ESTABLISH THE DUTIES OF THE STATEWIDE COORDINATOR; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO STUDY ISSUES RELATING TO THE FUNDING OF JROTC AND THE LICENSURE OF JROTC INSTRUCTORS AND TO REQUIRE THE BOARD TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE BEFORE THE 2002 SESSION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Subject to the availability of funding for such purpose, the State Superintendent of Public Education shall employ within the State Department of Education or, in the alternative, contract with the Mississippi Military Department for a statewide coordinator for Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in the public schools. If employed by the State Department of Education, the JROTC statewide coordinator must be an active or retired member of the military and must meet any additional qualifications that may be established for the position by the State Superintendent of Public Education or State Personnel Board.

(2) The following are the powers and duties of the JROTC statewide coordinator:

(a) To coordinate training of new JROTC instructors and continuing education programs for certified instructors;

(b) To facilitate communication between JROTC programs in the various public schools;

(c) To assist in organizing competitions among JROTC units from different high schools;
(d) To assist in the development of the JROTC curriculum;
(e) To compile information on scholarships available to JROTC participants and to solicit support for such scholarships;
(f) To assist in establishing support groups for parents of students participating in a JROTC program;
(g) To solicit and accept financial support for JROTC programs from private sector donors;
(h) To promote the involvement of JROTC units within their local communities;
(i) To facilitate interaction between JROTC units and the Mississippi National Guard and Mississippi Air National Guard;
(j) To promote, in general, the JROTC program in high schools throughout the state;
(k) To assist local schools with the application process for establishing new JROTC programs in high schools; and
(l) To perform such other duties relating to the JROTC program established by the State Superintendent of Public Education or State Board of Education.

SECTION 2. The State Board of Education shall study the issues relating to the funding of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) and the licensing of JROTC instructors. In studying the licensing issue, the board shall consider the credentials required for certification as a JROTC instructor. The board shall present a report on its findings concerning these issues along with any other issues related to JROTC to the Chairmen of the Education Committees of the House of Representatives and Senate before December 15, 2001, which report must include recommended legislation necessary to effectuate the board’s recommendations relating to JROTC.

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