AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 9-7-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CREATE AN ADDITIONAL JUDGESHIP FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT COURT DISTRICT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 9-7-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

9-7-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, there shall be three (3) judges for the First Circuit Court District.

(2) From and after January 1, 2002, there shall be four (4) judges for the First Circuit Court District. The initial term for the judgeship created under this subsection shall begin on January 1, 2002, and shall end at the same time as the terms of circuit judges generally. The initial holder of the judgeship created by this subsection shall be appointed.

SECTION 2. The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor, or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the Attorney General of the United States or to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended, subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature during the 2001 Regular Session or any subsequent
session. It is the intent of the Legislature that this act shall not take effect until the Legislature has funded the implementation thereof by line item appropriation as certified to the Secretary of State by the Legislative Budget Office.