

By: Senator(s) Thames, Huggins, Williamson, Furniss, Gordon, Michel, White (5th), Kirby, White (29th), Hamilton, Walls, Gollott, Stogner, Lee, Robertson, King, Chaney, Turner, Carmichael, Ross, Carlton, Cuevas, Minor, Jordan, Jackson, Johnson (19th), Dawkins, Frazier, Harvey, Mettetal, Dickerson, Burton, Scoper, Moffatt

To: Fees, Salaries and Administration; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2414

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE PEER COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH AND
2 MAINTAIN A TOLL-FREE GRIEVANCE REPORTING TELEPHONE SYSTEM FOR THE
3 RECEIPT AND REFERRAL FOR INVESTIGATION OF ALL COMPLAINTS
4 CONCERNING EMPLOYEE COURTESY AND SERVICE FROM STATE AGENCIES THAT
5 SERVE THE GENERAL PUBLIC; TO REQUIRE STATE AGENCIES THAT SERVE THE
6 GENERAL PUBLIC TO POST IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE A SIGN PRINTED
7 THEREON THE TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER; TO REQUIRE THE PEER
8 COMMITTEE TO SUBMIT A SUMMARY OF THE COMPLAINT ACTIVITY TO THE
9 MEMBERS OF THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE; TO AUTHORIZE
10 THE PEER COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT A COMPLETE REVIEW OF ANY TELEPHONE
11 COMPLAINT AT ITS DISCRETION; TO INSURE THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF PEER
12 RECORDS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

14 SECTION 1. (1) Beginning July 1, 2001, every state agency
15 that serves the general public shall post in a conspicuous place a
16 sign printed with the question, "How am I serving you?," the
17 toll-free telephone number of the Joint Legislative Committee on
18 Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER), and
19 instructions on how complaints about agency courtesy and service
20 may be referred to the PEER Committee. The Joint Legislative
21 Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER)
22 shall provide each agency with a design for the above-described
23 sign. All such signs shall be produced at the expense of each
24 agency, and shall be posted in all agency offices where the public
25 receives direct service, including, but not limited to, county,
26 district, area and central offices.

27 (2) The Joint Legislative Committee on Performance
28 Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) shall establish and
29 maintain a toll-free grievance reporting telephone system for the
30 receipt of all complaints concerning employee courtesy and service
31 from state agencies that serve the general public.

32 (3) Upon receipt of a complaint, the Joint Legislative
33 Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER)
34 shall notify the executive director of any agency that was the
35 subject of any telephone courtesy or service complaint and shall
36 refer such complaint to the agency for investigation. Any agency
37 which was the subject of a telephone complaint shall provide PEER
38 with a report on corrective actions taken in response to such
39 complaint. On or before July 1 of each year, the Joint
40 Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure
41 Review (PEER) shall file a brief summary of the complaint activity
42 with members of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, and with
43 any standing committee of the Legislature which the Joint
44 Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER)
45 deems an appropriate recipient of such report.

46 (4) The Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and
47 Expenditure Review (PEER), at its discretion, may retain any
48 telephone courtesy or service complaint, or any component of such
49 complaint, to serve as the basis for a complete performance
50 evaluation, expenditure review, audit or investigation. Reports
51 of the outcome of such performance evaluations, expenditure
52 review, audits or investigations shall be made as provided for in
53 Section 5-3-61. The authority to receive and refer telephone
54 complaints on agency courtesy and service is supplemental to all
55 other authority granted to the PEER Committee by law. Nothing
56 included in this section shall be construed as diminishing the
57 authority of the PEER Committee to conduct any performance
58 evaluation, expenditure review, audit or investigation in
59 accordance with any other provision of law.

60 (5) No report required under this section shall require the
61 Joint Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review
62 (PEER) to disclose any information which by committee rules is
63 required to be kept confidential.

64 (6) For purposes of this section, the term "state agencies"
65 means any agency as defined in Section 25-9-107(d).

66 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
67 and after its passage.