SENATE BILL NO. 2444

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTHERN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTER IN MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION TO ADMINISTER ANY PUBLIC FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATION OF THE CENTER; TO CREATE THE SOUTHERN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTER FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

SECTION 1. (1) The Legislature recognizes the need for an arts and entertainment center in Mississippi to enable Mississippi artists, musicians and dancers to demonstrate their skills to Mississippians and tourists from other states, and to serve as a shrine to Mississippi's rich tradition of artists, musicians and entertainers.

(2) The Southern Arts and Entertainment Center is hereby established to be housed in a facility located within the corporate limits of Meridian, Mississippi.

(3) The Department of Finance and Administration is authorized to receive any public funds made available from appropriation or otherwise for the construction, equipping or operation of the Southern Arts and Entertainment Center facility, and may purchase property for such purpose. The Department of Finance and Administration may also enter into a lease, sublease or operating agreement for the operation of such facility for a period not exceeding twenty (20) years.

(4) There is established in the State Treasury the Southern Arts and Entertainment Center Fund into which shall be deposited any public funds from appropriation or otherwise made available for the construction, equipping or operation of the Southern Arts and Entertainment Center. Any unexpended funds in said fund
remaining at the end of the fiscal year shall not lapse, but shall be available for expenditure in any subsequent fiscal year.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.