

By: Senator(s) Thames

To: Fees, Salaries and  
Administration;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2798

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAVE TO ALL ELIGIBLE  
2 STATE EMPLOYEES TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM IN SUPPORT OF  
3 MISSISSIPPI'S SCHOOLS, COMMUNITIES, CITIZENS AND NONPROFIT  
4 ORGANIZATIONS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH COMMUNITY  
5 SERVICE LEAVE MAY BE USED; TO REQUIRE THAT THE STATE PERSONNEL  
6 BOARD SHALL DEVELOP APPROPRIATE POLICIES, RULES, PROCEDURES AND  
7 CRITERIA FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING OF COMMUNITY SERVICE  
8 LEAVE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

9 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi recognizes the diverse and  
10 distinct needs of its schools, communities and citizens; and

11 WHEREAS, the employees of state government represent an  
12 important and significant source of volunteers who offer their  
13 talents and energies to the state's schools, communities and  
14 citizens and who support the work of public and private nonprofit  
15 organizations; and

16 WHEREAS, the employees of state government are committed to  
17 and often engaged in supporting the state's schools, communities,  
18 citizens and nonprofit organizations by volunteering time and  
19 effort but are often unable to meet those needs during regularly  
20 scheduled work hours; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

22 SECTION 1. (1) In recognition of the state's diverse needs  
23 for volunteers to support schools, communities, citizens and  
24 nonprofit organizations, and recognizing the commitment of state  
25 employees to engage in volunteer service to the state, the State  
26 Personnel Board shall establish a program for awarding community  
27 service leave to state employees.

28 (2) Community service leave shall be available to all  
29 eligible state employees to encourage volunteerism in support of

30 Mississippi's schools, communities, citizens and non-profit  
31 organizations. Leave awarded under any of these provisions is  
32 considered community service leave and shall be accounted for  
33 under the provisions of a community service leave policy to be  
34 promulgated by the State Personnel Board.

35 (2) State employees shall be awarded twenty-four (24) hours  
36 of community service leave annually which may be used for  
37 volunteer participation in the programs, services and  
38 organizations indicated herein, or they may elect to receive an  
39 award equivalent to one (1) hour for each week that a public  
40 school is in session. The latter award shall be used exclusively  
41 for mentoring or tutoring students in Mississippi schools. State  
42 employees may use all or part of their annual allotment of  
43 community service leave for the following:

44 (a) Leave for Child Involvement and School  
45 Volunteerism. Employees may use all or part of their annual  
46 allotment of community service leave to volunteerism in support of  
47 programs and services in public and private elementary, middle and  
48 high schools, and licensed public and private day care and  
49 preschool settings. A parent may use this leave to meet with a  
50 teacher or administrator concerning the parent's child or may  
51 attend any educational function sponsored by the school in which  
52 the child is participating.

53 (b) Leave for Nonprofit Organization Volunteerism.  
54 Employees may use all or part of their annual allotment of  
55 community service leave to volunteer time in nonprofit,  
56 nonpartisan community organizations which are designated as  
57 501(c)(3) agencies under the Internal Revenue Code, or human  
58 services organizations licensed or accredited to serve citizens  
59 with special needs, including children, youth and the elderly.

60 (c) Leave for Tutoring and Mentoring in Mississippi  
61 Schools.

62 In lieu of the 24-hour award, employees may elect to receive one  
63 (1) hour of volunteer leave for each week that public schools are  
64 in session as documented by a local board of education. This  
65 leave award shall be used exclusively for tutoring or mentoring a  
66 student in accordance with established standards, rules and  
67 guidelines for such arrangements as determined and documented by  
68 joint agreement with the employee's agency and the school.

69 (3) The State Personnel Board shall develop appropriate  
70 policies, rules, procedures and criteria for the administration  
71 and reporting of community service leave.

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