AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE ON GANG BEHAVIOR IN MISSISSIPPI TO COORDINATE THE EFFORTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES TO STUDY, TRACK, IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH GANGS AND DEVIANT GROUPS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE TASK FORCE AND SPECIFY THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TASK FORCE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OF THE TASK FORCE UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) There is created the Task Force on Gang Behavior in Mississippi, the purpose of which is to coordinate the efforts of law enforcement agencies in the state to study, track, identify and develop strategies for dealing with gangs and deviant groups and individuals.

(2) The task force shall be composed of the following voting members: the Director of the Bureau of Narcotics, or his designee; the Commissioner of Public Safety, or his designee; the chief drug investigator for the Mississippi Department of Corrections; the Attorney General, or his designee; the State Superintendent of Education, or his designee; the President of the Mississippi Sheriffs' Association, or his designee; the President of the Mississippi Association of Chiefs of Police, or his designee; the President of the Mississippi Association of Black Law Enforcement; a designee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant General of the Mississippi National Guard, or his designee; the Director of the Office of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services, or his designee; an appointee of the Lieutenant Governor; and the Adjutant
Governor who is an expert in criminal justice and gang activity, who shall serve as vice chairman of the task force; and an appointee of the Governor who is an expert in criminal justice and gang activity, who shall serve as chairman of the task force.

(3) The Chairmen of the Senate and House Committees on Juvenile Justice, Judiciary, Corrections and Education, or their designees, shall serve in an advisory capacity as ex officio nonvoting members of the task force.

(4) The Chairman of the Task Force on Gang Behavior shall be the Attorney General who shall call the initial meeting of the task force, or his designee. The task force shall adopt bylaws and rules for its efficient operation, which may include designation of its organizational structure including other officers and committees, duties of committees, staff policies and other such procedures as may be necessary.

(5) The task force shall be assigned to the Office of the Attorney General for administrative purposes only, which shall designate staff to assist the task force. The task force shall have a line item in the budget of the Attorney General and shall be financed through the annual appropriation wherein funds are made available. Members of the task force may receive, within the funds appropriated, reimbursement for travel expenses incurred while engaged in official business of the task force, except that the legislative members shall be paid from the contingent expense funds of their respective houses.

(6) The task force shall meet and conduct business at least quarterly. All meetings of the task force and any committees of the task force shall be open to the public, with opportunities for public comment.

(7) The task force may apply for and expend grants or other contributions for the purpose of studying and tracking gang and deviant activity in Mississippi.
(8) The Task Force on Gang Behavior in Mississippi shall have the following responsibilities:

(a) Serve as a liaison with the appropriate local law enforcement agencies, public school officials, human services officials, youth court personnel and correctional officials to track, study, identify and develop strategies for the prevention, identification and suppression of illegal gang and deviant groups.

(b) Serve an advocacy and public awareness role with the general public regarding illegal gang and deviant group behavior.

(c) Recommend and make annual reports to the Legislature and Governor regarding appropriate policies to reduce illegal and deviant gang activity in Mississippi.

(d) Consult with experts and examine actions taken in other states regarding illegal gang activity.

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