

By: Senator(s) Huggins

To: Universities and  
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2916

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-143-6, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF  
3 HIGHER LEARNING MAY USE FUNDS AVAILABLE UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI  
4 FAMILY MEDICINE EDUCATION LOAN/SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR A  
5 MISSISSIPPI STATE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY CARE  
6 PHYSICIANS AGREEING TO PRACTICE IN CRITICAL NEEDS AREAS OF THE  
7 STATE, AND TO MATCH SUCH FUNDS WITH FEDERAL FUNDS FOR SUCH LOAN  
8 REPAYMENT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 SECTION 1. Section 37-143-6, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
11 amended as follows:

12 37-143-6. (1) There is established a medical education  
13 scholarship program, which shall be administered by the Board of  
14 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning. The program  
15 shall provide a certain number of eligible applicants each year  
16 with a full scholarship to obtain a medical education at the  
17 University of Mississippi School of Medicine at no cost to the  
18 recipient, if the recipient meets the conditions upon which the  
19 scholarship is granted.

20 (2) The program shall provide scholarships to up to twenty  
21 (20) new recipients each year, and the program shall be funded  
22 from monies appropriated from the Health Care Expendable Fund  
23 established under Section 43-13-407 and from any other funds  
24 appropriated to or otherwise made available to the board of  
25 trustees for that purpose. The amounts that may be expended  
26 annually for scholarships under the program shall not exceed the  
27 following: Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) in fiscal  
28 year 2001; One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in fiscal year  
29 2002; One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) in

30 fiscal year 2003; and Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) in  
31 fiscal year 2004 and in any later fiscal year.

32 (3) The scholarship shall be in an amount that will pay the  
33 full cost of attendance, as defined by federal law and regulation,  
34 at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine for the entire  
35 time necessary for the recipient to complete the requirements for  
36 a medical degree. The actual amount of the scholarship shall be  
37 determined by the Office of Financial Aid of the University of  
38 Mississippi Medical Center but shall not exceed Twenty-five  
39 Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) per year for any recipient.

40 (4) Before being granted a scholarship, each applicant shall  
41 enter into a contract with the board of trustees, which shall be  
42 deemed a contract with the State of Mississippi, agreeing to the  
43 terms and conditions upon which the scholarship will be granted.  
44 In order to receive a scholarship under the program, the recipient  
45 must agree in the contract to practice family medicine for a  
46 period of not less than ten (10) years after completion of his or  
47 her residency in an area of the state that is a critical needs  
48 area for primary medical care at the time of the recipient's entry  
49 into medical practice. The determination and designation of the  
50 areas of the state that are critical needs areas for primary  
51 medical care shall be made by a committee to be known as the  
52 Medical Care Critical Needs Committee, which shall be composed of  
53 the following persons: the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs of  
54 the University of Mississippi Medical Center, who shall be  
55 chairman of the committee; the Executive Director of the State  
56 Department of Health; the Executive Director of the Division of  
57 Medicaid; the President of the Mississippi State Medical  
58 Association, or his designee; the President of the Mississippi  
59 State Hospital Association, or his designee; the President of the  
60 Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians; and the Executive  
61 Director of the Mississippi Primary Health Care Association. The  
62 committee shall meet at least once annually to determine and

63 designate the areas of the state that are critical needs areas for  
64 primary medical care in which scholarship recipients may practice  
65 family medicine in order to fulfill their contractual obligation.

66 (5) If a scholarship recipient leaves the University of  
67 Mississippi School of Medicine before graduation, or leaves his or  
68 her residency before completion, or fails to practice family  
69 medicine for a period of ten (10) years in a critical needs area  
70 for primary medical care as designated by the Medical Care  
71 Critical Needs Committee under subsection (4) of this section, the  
72 full amount that the recipient received under the scholarship  
73 shall be due and payable within ninety (90) days, together with  
74 interest. The amount of interest due shall be equal to the annual  
75 rate of return on the Health Care Trust Fund established under  
76 Section 43-13-405 for each year from the time the recipient  
77 received the scholarship money until the time the scholarship  
78 money is repaid. The board of trustees may bring suit against any  
79 scholarship recipient to recover the amount due to the state under  
80 this section for the recipient's failure to comply with the  
81 conditions upon which the scholarship was granted, as provided in  
82 this section and in the contract between the recipient and the  
83 board of trustees. The board of trustees is authorized to  
84 postpone or forgive the repayment of all or part of the amount  
85 that a recipient received under the scholarship and the interest  
86 that would otherwise be due under this subsection if the  
87 recipient's failure to comply with the conditions upon which the  
88 scholarship was granted was due to circumstances beyond the  
89 recipient's control that caused the recipient to be physically  
90 unable to comply with those conditions, such as suffering a severe  
91 illness, injury or other disabling condition.

92 (6) From and after July 1, 2001, the Board of Trustees of  
93 State Institutions of Higher Learning is empowered and authorized  
94 to use any funds available under the family medicine  
95 scholarship/loan program established under this section for

96 repaying the state or federal medical education loans made to  
97 licensed primary care physicians who agree to practice family  
98 medicine for a period of not less than ten (10) years in an area  
99 of the state that is a critical needs area for primary medical  
100 care as designated by the committee created in subsection (4), to  
101 be known as the Mississippi State Loan Repayment Program. The  
102 Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall  
103 be fully authorized to use such funds to apply for and receive  
104 federal matching funds on a 50/50 basis to make funding available  
105 for the repayment of such medical education loans. In order to  
106 receive a state loan repayment under this section, each applicant  
107 shall enter into a contract with the board of trustees, which  
108 shall be deemed a contract with the State of Mississippi, agreeing  
109 to the terms and conditions upon which the loan repayment will be  
110 granted, which shall include all conditions specified under  
111 subsection (4) for a recipient of a scholarship loan. The board  
112 of trustees shall give priority placement consideration for the  
113 Mississippi State Loan Repayment Program to current or former  
114 residents of the State of Mississippi, or to practitioners whose  
115 immediate family members are residents of the State of  
116 Mississippi, and any physician participating in a family medicine  
117 residency is fully eligible for the program.

118       (7) The board of trustees shall establish such rules and  
119 regulations as it deems necessary and proper to carry out the  
120 purposes and intent of this section.

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