

By: Senator(s) Huggins

To: Universities and  
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2916  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-143-6, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO EXPAND THE MEDICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO INCLUDE A  
3 LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR FAMILY MEDICINE PHYSICIANS AGREEING TO  
4 SERVE IN A PRIMARY CARE CRITICAL NEEDS SHORTAGE AREA, TO AUTHORIZE  
5 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO  
6 USE FUNDS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT  
7 PROGRAM TO SECURE FEDERAL MATCHING FUNDS TO ASSIST IN REPAYING  
8 EDUCATIONAL LOANS FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CLINICIANS AGREEING TO  
9 PRACTICE IN PRIMARY CARE CRITICAL NEEDS SHORTAGE AREAS, AND TO  
10 REQUIRE NO LESS THAN EIGHT YEARS SERVICE IN EXCHANGE FOR LOAN  
11 REPAYMENTS THROUGH THE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

15 37-143-6. (1) There is established a medical education  
16 scholarship and loan repayment program, which shall be  
17 administered by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of  
18 Higher Learning. Each year, the program shall provide a certain  
19 number of eligible applicants, if the applicant meets the  
20 conditions upon which the scholarship or loan repayment is  
21 granted, with: (a) a full scholarship to obtain a medical  
22 education at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine at  
23 no cost to the recipient; or (b) funds for repaying state and  
24 federal medical education loans.

25 (2) The program shall provide scholarships or loan  
26 repayments to up to twenty (20) new recipients each year, of which  
27 no more than ten (10) may be recipients of loan repayments. The  
28 program shall be funded from monies appropriated from the Health  
29 Care Expendable Fund established under Section 43-13-407 \* \* \*.  
30 The amounts that may be expended annually for scholarships and

31 loan repayments under the program shall not exceed the following:  
32 Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) in fiscal year 2001;  
33 One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in fiscal year 2002; One  
34 Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) in fiscal  
35 year 2003; and Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) in fiscal year  
36 2004 and in any later fiscal year.

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

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

64 President of the Mississippi State Medical Association or his  
65 designee; the President of the Mississippi State Hospital  
66 Association or his designee; the President of the Mississippi  
67 Academy of Family Physicians; and the Executive Director of the  
68 Mississippi Primary Health Care Association. The committee shall  
69 meet at least once annually to determine and designate the areas  
70 of the state that are critical needs areas for primary medical  
71 care in which scholarship recipients may practice family medicine  
72 in order to fulfill their contractual obligation.

73       (5) (a) Beginning on July 1, 2001, the Board of Trustees of  
74 State Institutions of Higher Learning may use any funds available  
75 under the medical education scholarship and loan repayment program  
76 for repaying state and federal medical education loans made to  
77 licensed family medicine physicians who agree to practice family  
78 medicine for a period of not less than eight (8) years in an area  
79 of the state that is a critical needs area for primary medical  
80 care, as designated by the Medical Care Critical Needs Committee.  
81 The board of trustees shall use such funds to apply for and  
82 receive federal matching funds from the National Health Service  
83 Corps to assist in the repayment of qualified educational loans  
84 for primary health care clinicians who agree to practice in a  
85 critical needs area for primary medical care. In order to receive  
86 a state loan repayment under this section, an applicant must enter  
87 into a contract with the board of trustees, which shall be deemed  
88 a contract with the State of Mississippi, agreeing to the terms  
89 and conditions upon which the loan repayment will be granted. The  
90 contract must include all conditions specified under subsection  
91 (4) for scholarship recipients; however, for a loan repayment, the  
92 minimum period of service required in an area of the state that is  
93 a critical needs area for primary medical care at the time the  
94 contract is executed is eight (8) years. The contract also must  
95 specify the total amount of the loan repayment and a schedule for

96 making payments to the recipient, based upon the recommendation of  
97 the Medical Care Critical Needs Committee.

98 (b) The board of trustees shall give priority in  
99 awarding loan repayments to family medicine physicians according  
100 to the following:

101 (i) University of Mississippi School of Medicine  
102 graduates or persons who have completed successfully a full  
103 three-year family medicine residency training program in the State  
104 of Mississippi;

105 (ii) Persons who were born in Mississippi who have  
106 completed training in a certified family medicine residency  
107 program outside the State of Mississippi; and

108 (iii) Physicians who are practicing outside the  
109 State of Mississippi who received training at a medical school  
110 outside the state and who are board certified in family practice.

111 (c) The Medical Care Critical Needs Committee shall  
112 meet at least once annually to determine and designate the areas  
113 of the state that are critical needs areas for primary medical  
114 care in which loan repayment recipients may practice family  
115 medicine and other primary care health professional disciplines in  
116 order to fulfill their contractual obligation. The committee also  
117 shall determine the priority of additional primary health care  
118 clinicians who are eligible to participate in the state loan  
119 repayment program using any National Health Service Corps matching  
120 funds or other funds excluding funds appropriated by the  
121 Legislature.

122 (6) If a scholarship recipient leaves the University of  
123 Mississippi School of Medicine before graduation, or leaves his or  
124 her residency before completion, or fails to practice family  
125 medicine for a period of ten (10) years in a critical needs area  
126 for primary medical care as designated by the Medical Care  
127 Critical Needs Committee under subsection (4) of this section, the  
128 full amount that the recipient received under the scholarship

129 shall be due and payable within ninety (90) days, together with  
130 interest. If a loan repayment recipient fails to practice family  
131 medicine for a period of eight (8) years in a critical needs area  
132 for primary medical care as designated by the Medical Care  
133 Critical Needs Committee under subsection (5)(c) of this section,  
134 the full amount that the recipient received for loan repayments  
135 shall be due and payable within ninety (90) days, together with  
136 interest. The amount of interest due shall be equal to the annual  
137 rate of return on the Health Care Trust Fund established under  
138 Section 43-13-405 for each year from the time the recipient  
139 received the scholarship or loan repayment money until the time  
140 the scholarship or loan repayment money is repaid. The board of  
141 trustees may bring suit against any scholarship or loan repayment  
142 recipient to recover the amount due to the state under this  
143 section for the recipient's failure to comply with the conditions  
144 upon which the scholarship or loan repayment was granted, as  
145 provided in this section and in the contract between the recipient  
146 and the board of trustees. The board of trustees is authorized to  
147 postpone or forgive the repayment of all or part of the amount  
148 that a recipient received under the scholarship or for loan  
149 repayments and the interest that would otherwise be due under this  
150 subsection if the recipient's failure to comply with the  
151 conditions upon which the scholarship or loan repayment was  
152 granted was due to circumstances beyond the recipient's control  
153 that caused the recipient to be physically unable to comply with  
154 those conditions, such as suffering a severe illness, injury or  
155 other disabling condition.

156 (7) The board of trustees shall establish such rules and  
157 regulations, based upon recommendations submitted by the Medical  
158 Care Critical Needs Committee, which it deems necessary and proper  
159 to carry out the purposes and intent of this section.

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