AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WITH THE
COOPERATION OF THE STATE VETERANS AFFAIRS BOARD, TO DEVISE AND
IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM WHICH AWARDS FULL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS TO
QUALIFYING WORLD WAR II VETERANS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, during the 1940's, thousands of young men and women
across the United States left high school to serve valorously in
the armed forces during World War II; and

WHEREAS, the sacrifices of these young men and women earned
America its freedom, helped the United States gain status as a
superpower, and shaped the course of history throughout the entire
world; and

WHEREAS, after World War II ended, many of these brave
veterans were unable to finish high school for various reasons,
but they led productive lives and served their communities
throughout their lifetimes; and

WHEREAS, awarding high school diplomas to qualifying World
War II veterans would be a small and overdue gesture of our
society's profound gratitude for the sacrifice these courageous
individuals made in the name of freedom; NOW, THEREFORE,
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. The State Department of Education, with the
cooperation of the State Veterans' Affairs Board, shall devise and
implement a program which awards full high school diplomas to
qualifying World War II veterans. The purpose of the program is
to award high school diplomas to World War II veterans who left
high school prior to graduation to enter United States military
service. The department and the board shall jointly develop an
ST: Department of Education; devise program to award high school diplomas to World War II veterans.

application procedure, distribute applications and publicize the program. All honorably discharged World War II veterans who are residents or former residents of the state, who served between September 16, 1940, and December 31, 1946, and who did not return to school and complete their education after the war shall be eligible to receive a diploma. Diplomas may be issued posthumously. Upon approval of an application, the local school board shall issue a standard high school diploma for an eligible veteran from the veteran's school of attendance or from the existing high school which the veteran would have attended. The diploma shall clearly indicate that the recipient is a veteran of World War II and that the diploma was issued at a later date due to the veteran's participation in the war. The State Department of Education and the State Veteran Affairs Board shall work together to provide communities with information about hosting a diploma ceremony on or around Veterans Day. The diploma shall be mailed to the veteran or, if the veteran is deceased, to the veteran's family.

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