

By: Senator(s) King, Harvey, Chaney, Johnson (19th), White (29th), Michel, Furniss, Carmichael, Thames, Burton, Kirby, Browning, Dearing, Hyde-Smith, Lee, Scoper, Chamberlin, Cuevas, Stogner, Hamilton, Tollison, Smith, Jackson, Ross, Hewes

To: Education; Veterans and Military Affairs

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 2937

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

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

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

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

16 WHEREAS, awarding high school diplomas to qualifying World
17 War II veterans would be a small and overdue gesture of our
18 society's profound gratitude for the sacrifice these courageous
19 individuals made in the name of freedom; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

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

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