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

SECTION 1. Section 73-25-35, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

73-25-35. Registered nurses who are licensed and certified by the Mississippi Board of Nursing as nurse practitioners are not prohibited from such nursing practice, but are entitled to engage therein without a physician's license. Provided, however, that licensed and certified nurse practitioners may perform acts of medical diagnosis and treatment, prescription and operation in an area of the state which is a critical need area for primary medical care, as determined and designated by the Medical Care Critical Needs Committee established under Section 37-143-6 (4), Mississippi Code of 1972, without the direct supervision of a licensed physician. Such acts shall be performed under the general supervision of a licensed physician within the framework of standing protocols which identify the medical acts to be performed and the conditions for their performance.

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