SENATE BILL NO. 2976

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-9-13, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF ALL SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS FROM AND AFTER JANUARY 1, 2004; TO AMEND SECTION 37-9-25, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; TO REPEAL SECTION 37-9-12, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR A REFERENDUM ON THE QUESTION OF RETAINING THE ELECTIVE METHOD OF CHOOSING THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION; TO REPEAL SECTIONS 37-5-61 THROUGH 37-5-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE FOR THE ELECTION OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS OF EDUCATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-9-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

[Until December 31, 2003, this section will read as follows:]

37-9-13. Each school district shall have a superintendent of schools, selected in the manner provided by law. No person shall be eligible to the office of superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid administrator's license issued by the State Department of Education and shall have had not less than four (4) years of classroom or administrative experience.

[From and after January 1, 2004, this section will read as follows:]

37-9-13. (1) In all public school districts, the school board shall, on or before January 15 of each year, appoint the superintendent of schools of such district, except in those cases where the superintendent has been previously selected and has a contract which is valid for the ensuing scholastic year.

(2) No person shall be eligible to the office of superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid administrator's license issued by the State Department of
Education and shall have had not less than four (4) years of classroom or administrative experience.

SECTION 2. Section 37-9-25, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

[Until December 31, 2003, this section will read as follows:]

37-9-25. The school board shall have the power and authority, in its discretion, to employ the superintendent, unless such superintendent is elected, for not exceeding four (4) scholastic years and the principals or licensed employees for not exceeding three (3) scholastic years. In such case, contracts shall be entered into with such superintendents, principals and licensed employees for the number of years for which they have been employed. All such contracts with licensed employees shall for the years after the first year thereof be subject to the contingency that the licensed employee may be released if, during the life of the contract, the average daily attendance should decrease from that existing during the previous year and thus necessitate a reduction in the number of licensed employees during any year after the first year of the contract. However, in all such cases the licensed employee must be released before July 1 or at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the school term, whichever date should occur earlier. The salary to be paid for the years after the first year of such contract shall be subject to revision, either upward or downward, in the event of an increase or decrease in the funds available for the payment thereof, but, unless such salary is revised prior to the beginning of a school year, it shall remain for such school year at the amount fixed in such contract. However, where school district funds, other than minimum education program funds, are available during the school year in excess of the amount anticipated at the beginning of the school year the salary to be paid for such year may be increased to the extent that such additional funds are available and nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit same.
[From and after January 1, 2004, this section will read as follows:]

37-9-25. The school board shall have the power and authority, in its discretion, to employ the superintendent for not exceeding four (4) scholastic years and the principals or licensed employees for not exceeding three (3) scholastic years. In such case, contracts shall be entered into with such superintendents, principals and licensed employees for the number of years for which they have been employed. All such contracts with licensed employees shall for the years after the first year thereof be subject to the contingency that the licensed employee may be released if, during the life of the contract, the average daily attendance should decrease from that existing during the previous year and thus necessitate a reduction in the number of licensed employees during any year after the first year of the contract. However, in all such cases the licensed employee must be released before July 1 or at least thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of the school term, whichever date should occur earlier. The salary to be paid for the years after the first year of such contract shall be subject to revision, either upward or downward, in the event of an increase or decrease in the funds available for the payment thereof, but, unless such salary is revised prior to the beginning of a school year, it shall remain for such school year at the amount fixed in such contract. However, where school district funds, other than minimum education program funds, are available during the school year in excess of the amount anticipated at the beginning of the school year the salary to be paid for such year may be increased to the extent that such additional funds are available and nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit same.

SECTION 3. Section 37-9-12, Mississippi Code of 1972, which provides for a referendum on the question of retaining the
elective method of choosing the county superintendent of education, is hereby repealed.


SECTION 5. The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor, or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the Attorney General of the United States or to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.