H. B. No. 640

HOUSE BILL NO. 640

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-87, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, TO DEVELOP A SCREENING INSTRUMENT FOR THE STUDENT VISION SCREENING PROGRAM, AND TO DELETE THE REQUIREMENT THAT AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE VISION SCREENING PROGRAM APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR AND HOUSE SPEAKER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-3-87, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-3-87. (1) The State Department of Education is authorized and empowered to establish a student vision screening program to make eye screening services available to students in Grades K-12 in the public schools in order to detect vision problems which can lead to academic problems. Such eye screening service shall be based on a process that is screening in nature, and not diagnostic, which is intended to identify with a reasonably high probability, students with a wide range of eye problems who should seek the services of an eye care professional for examination, diagnosis and corrective recommendation. Such eye screening service shall provide each student screened with a report of the student's screening results to be taken home. Each school shall be provided with a list of the students screened, and their results. Statistical summaries of the screening results shall be provided to each school, and composite statistics by school system, county or district shall be provided to the State Department of Education. The State Department of Education may contract with any legal entity to administer the student vision screening program on the school district level, and such contract
shall be let on a competitive basis. State funding for the program shall only be available subject to appropriation by the Legislature.

(2) The school board of any local school district shall cooperate with the State Department of Education and any entity under contract with the department to implement the student vision screening program established under this section.

(3) The State Department of Education, in conjunction with the State Department of Health, shall develop or select an appropriate screening instrument to be used in the student vision screening program.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.