

By: Representative Snowden

To: Apportionment and  
Elections; Judiciary A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1288

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 23-15-297, 23-15-975, 23-15-976,  
2 23-15-977 AND 23-15-995, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REMOVE  
3 JUDGES OF THE SUPREME COURT FROM THE NONPARTISAN JUDICIAL ELECTION  
4 ACT; TO PLACE THE FILING FEE FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF  
5 JUDGES OF THE SUPREME COURT AND COURT OF APPEALS IN THE LAW  
6 GOVERNING PARTY NOMINATIONS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE CANDIDATE FOR  
7 JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OR COURT OF APPEALS IN THE GENERAL  
8 ELECTION RECEIVING THE MOST VOTES SHALL BE DECLARED THE WINNER;  
9 TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION AGAINST PARTIES CAMPAIGNING, ENDORSING  
10 OR CONTRIBUTING TO JUDICIAL CANDIDATES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

12 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-15-297, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
13 amended as follows:

14 23-15-297. All candidates upon entering the race for party  
15 nominations for office shall first pay to the proper officer as  
16 provided for in Section 23-15-299 for each primary election the  
17 following amounts:

18 (a) Candidates for Governor not to exceed Three Hundred  
19 Dollars (\$300.00).

20 (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney  
21 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public  
22 Accounts, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture  
23 and Commerce, State Highway Commissioner and State Public Service  
24 Commissioner, not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

25 (c) Candidates for district attorney, not to exceed One  
26 Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

27 (d) Candidates for State Senator, State Representative,  
28 sheriff, chancery clerk, circuit clerk, tax assessor, tax  
29 collector, county attorney, county superintendent of education and  
30 board of supervisors, not to exceed Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00).



31 (e) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,  
32 justice court judge and constable, not to exceed Ten Dollars  
33 (\$10.00).

34 (f) Candidates for United States Senator, not to exceed  
35 Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00).

36 (g) Candidates for United States Representative, not to  
37 exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

38 (h) Candidates for Supreme Court judge and judge of the  
39 Court of Appeals, not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

40 **SECTION 2.** Section 23-15-975, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
41 amended as follows:

42 23-15-975. As used in Sections 23-15-974 through 23-15-985  
43 of this subarticle, the term "judicial office" includes the office  
44 of \* \* \* circuit judge, chancellor, county court judge and family  
45 court judge. All such justices and judges shall be full-time  
46 positions and such justices and judges shall not engage in the  
47 practice of law before any court, administrative agency or other  
48 judicial or quasi-judicial forum except as provided by law for  
49 finalizing pending cases after election to judicial office.

50 **SECTION 3.** Section 23-15-976, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
51 amended as follows:

52 23-15-976. A judicial office is a nonpartisan office and a  
53 candidate for election thereto is prohibited from campaigning or  
54 qualifying for such an office based on party affiliation. \* \* \*

55 **SECTION 4.** Section 23-15-977, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
56 amended as follows:

57 23-15-977. (1) All candidates for judicial office as  
58 defined in Section 23-15-975 of this subarticle shall file their  
59 intent to be a candidate with the proper officials not later than  
60 5:00 p.m. on the first Friday after the first Monday in May prior  
61 to the general election for judicial office and shall pay to the  
62 proper officials the following amounts:

63 \* \* \*



64           (a) Candidates for circuit judge and chancellor, the  
65 sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

66           (b) Candidates for county judge and family court judge,  
67 the sum of Fifteen Dollars (\$15.00).

68           (2) Candidates for judicial offices listed in paragraph  
69 (a) \* \* \* of subsection (1) of this section shall file their  
70 intent to be a candidate with, and pay the proper assessment made  
71 pursuant to subsection (1) of this section to, the State Board of  
72 Election Commissioners.

73           (3) Candidates for judicial offices listed in paragraph (b)  
74 of subsection (1) of this section shall file their intent to be a  
75 candidate with, and pay the proper assessment made pursuant to  
76 subsection (1) of this section to, the circuit clerk of the proper  
77 county. The circuit clerk shall notify the county commissioners  
78 of election of all persons who have filed their intent to be a  
79 candidate filed with, and paid the proper assessment to, such  
80 clerk. Such notification shall occur within two (2) business days  
81 and shall contain all necessary information.

82           **SECTION 5.** Section 23-15-995, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
83 amended as follows:

84           23-15-995. \* \* \* The general laws for the election of state  
85 officers shall apply to and govern the election of judges of the  
86 Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court except that in the general  
87 election the candidate receiving the most votes shall be declared  
88 the winner.

89           **SECTION 6.** The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi  
90 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,  
91 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the  
92 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States  
93 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the  
94 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and  
95 extended.



96           **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
97 and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting  
98 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

