

By: Representative Chism

To: Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 1325

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 27-19-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
 2 TO PROVIDE THAT IN MEMORY OF THE THOUSANDS OF PERSONS KILLED AND
 3 INJURED AS A RESULT OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, TERRORIST ATTACKS
 4 UPON THE UNITED STATES, AS A SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION OF THE PATRIOTIC
 5 SPIRIT OF THE CITIZENS OF THIS STATE AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE
 6 ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE NATIONAL GUARD OF
 7 MISSISSIPPI, BEGINNING WITH THE NEXT LICENSE TAG SERIES ISSUED
 8 AFTER JULY 1, 2002, EACH TAG SHALL DISPLAY A REPLICA OF THE UNITED
 9 STATES FLAG IN THE UPPER LEFT CORNER AND A REPLICA OF THE
 10 MISSISSIPPI FLAG IN THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER; AND FOR RELATED
 11 PURPOSES.

12 WHEREAS, in memory of the thousands of innocent human beings
 13 who were killed and injured as a result of the unprovoked
 14 terrorist attacks upon American soil occurring on September 11,
 15 2001; and

16 WHEREAS, as a symbolic expression of the patriotic spirit of
 17 the citizens of this state and as a way of demonstrating their
 18 support for the valiant members of the Armed Forces of the United
 19 States and the Mississippi National Guard who perform their duties
 20 of defending this great nation and state, often at great risk of
 21 personal peril; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

23 **SECTION 1.** Section 27-19-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
 24 amended as follows:

25 27-19-31. (1) The State Tax Commission is authorized and
 26 directed to establish and maintain a vehicle registration renewal
 27 system whereby the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle or
 28 trailer may be issued for five (5) years with the approval of the
 29 License Tag Commission, except for motor vehicles registered in
 30 excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds gross vehicle weight, and
 31 motor vehicles in a fleet registered under Section 27-19-66,



32 apportioned vehicles, rental and commercial trailers and buses,
33 which shall be issued for a period of time determined by the State
34 Tax Commission. During each intervening year of the period for
35 which license tags are issued, the State Tax Commission shall
36 issue up to two (2) license decals, in lieu of the license tags,
37 which will specify the month and year in which the license tag
38 shall expire. Motor vehicles in a corporate fleet registered
39 under Section 27-19-66, shall not be issued decals specifying the
40 month and year of expiration.

41 Any series of tags may be cancelled by the commissioner with
42 the approval of the License Tag Commission and a new series of
43 tags issued.

44 (2) The license decals issued in lieu of the license tags
45 shall indicate the month and the last two (2) figures of the year
46 for which such license shall expire, and these decals shall be
47 color coded so that it shall be possible to distinguish the year
48 and the month for which such decals shall expire. The license
49 decals shall be attached to the license tag of the motor vehicle
50 or trailer, and when so attached shall be deemed to be the license
51 tag for the ensuing registration year. The month decal shall be
52 attached in an upright position in the lower left corner of the
53 license tag, and the year decal shall be attached in an upright
54 position in the lower right corner of the license tag. Decals
55 specifying the month and year of expiration shall not be required
56 to be attached to license tags on motor vehicles in a corporate
57 fleet registered under Section 27-19-66.

58 Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, the
59 registration year shall be a period of one (1) year commencing on
60 the first day of the month following the month in which the
61 vehicle was acquired. Beginning October 1, 1982, original
62 registrations of motor vehicles, except motor vehicles registered
63 in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds gross vehicle weight,
64 apportioned vehicles and buses, may be made and shall be prorated



65 for a period of from six (6) to eleven (11) months according to
66 regulations established by the State Tax Commission to reduce a
67 disproportionate number of registrations for a particular month.
68 Beginning July 1, 1995, original registrations and renewal
69 registrations of motor vehicles in corporate fleets registered
70 under Section 27-19-66, shall be prorated according to regulations
71 established by the State Tax Commission so as to cause the
72 registration of such fleet motor vehicles to coincide with the
73 anniversary month for corporate fleets established by the State
74 Tax Commission. Where a vehicle is registered for a period less
75 than twelve (12) months, the anniversary month shall be the month
76 of the expiration of the original license tag.

77 Beginning July 1, 1996, original registrations and renewal
78 registrations of motor vehicles in individual fleets registered
79 under Section 27-19-66 shall be prorated according to regulations
80 established by the State Tax Commission so as to cause the
81 registration of such fleet motor vehicles to coincide with the
82 anniversary month for individual fleets established by the county
83 tax collector. Where a vehicle is registered for a period less
84 than twelve (12) months, the anniversary month shall be the month
85 of the expiration of the original license tag.

86 The State Tax Commission, with the approval of the License
87 Tag Commission, shall so specify the area or areas on the license
88 tag where the license decals shall be attached. The number of the
89 license tag shall be written across its face, and the number of
90 the tag shall represent the registration number; and upon all the
91 tags for private passenger vehicles the word "MISSISSIPPI" shall
92 be written across the top of the tag in capital letters
93 sufficiently large to be easily read, but upon all other tags such
94 word may be abbreviated. The number of the license tag shall not
95 exceed seven (7) letters, numbers or a combination of such letters
96 and numbers. Beginning with the next tag series issued after July
97 1, 2002, each tag shall display a replica of the United States



98 flag in the upper left corner and a replica of the Mississippi
99 flag in the upper right corner. Also, on all tags sold and
100 issued, an appropriate place will be provided thereon to place
101 license decals indicating the expiration date of the tag. For the
102 purposes of this section and Section 27-19-32, Mississippi Code of
103 1972, the term "decal," "decals" or "license decal" shall mean a
104 tab, sticker or other similar device attached to a license tag
105 which validates same for a stated period of time. One (1) license
106 tag and up to two (2) license decals shall be furnished for all
107 vehicles and shall be fastened immovably twelve (12) inches or
108 more above the ground, at the rear of the vehicle under or over
109 the rear light, with the number in upright position so that it
110 will be plainly visible and legible at all times, and at night at
111 a distance of sixty (60) feet. In the case of tractors or other
112 motor vehicles drawing or pulling trailers, semitrailers or farm
113 implements, the tag shall be fastened upon such vehicle twelve
114 (12) inches or more above the ground, upon the front or back of
115 such vehicle, with the number in an upright position. Such
116 license plate, all characters and any legally affixed decals shall
117 not be defaced, covered or obstructed from view by any object,
118 decal, sticker, paint, marking or license plate bracket or holder.
119 Any person who defaces, covers or obstructs any portion of a
120 license tag with any sticker, decoration, paint, marking, license
121 plate bracket or holder or any other thing or device, in such a
122 manner that the characters and any legally affixed decals on the
123 tag cannot be read, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon
124 conviction, shall be punished by a fine of not more than
125 Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00). However, it shall not be unlawful
126 for the county name to be partially or completely obstructed from
127 view by any object, decal, sticker or license plate bracket or
128 holder. Unless the license tag with current decals is fastened to
129 the vehicle as herein provided, the said vehicle shall be regarded



130 as operating without a license tag, and the owner or operator
131 shall be liable for the penalties herein provided.

132 In addition to the above requirements, license tags for
133 private passenger vehicles shall have a county designation thereon
134 referencing the name of the county in which such vehicle is
135 registered.

136 Law enforcement officers of this state shall remove from a
137 motor vehicle or trailer any license tag and/or decals which are
138 so defaced that proper identification cannot be reasonably made.
139 The officer shall issue to the driver of such vehicle a tag permit
140 which shall be valid for a period of five (5) days. Each person
141 receiving such tag permit shall purchase, within five (5) days
142 from the date of the issuance of the permit, a new tag and/or
143 decals for the fee set forth in Section 27-19-37, Mississippi Code
144 of 1972, for a substitute tag.

145 Any person who has a license tag or decals on a vehicle which
146 may be so defaced that proper identification cannot be reasonably
147 made may remove such and purchase another license tag and/or
148 decals for the same fee required for a substitute tag. If any
149 license tag shall deteriorate due to age so that identification
150 cannot be reasonably made, the owner may surrender such tag to the
151 issuing authority and be issued a new tag and like decals at no
152 cost.

153 (3) The State Tax Commission is authorized to promulgate
154 appropriate rules and regulations to govern the use and display of
155 license decals and to publish a summary thereof which shall be
156 available to state officials and the public upon request.

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

