SENATE BILL NO. 2511

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH TO ADOPT AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO ENFORCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ABATEMENT OF SUCTION HAZARDS IN PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS; TO PROVIDE THAT NO PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL MAY BE OPENED FOR USE UNLESS THE OWNER OR OPERATOR HAS COMPLIED WITH SAID REQUIREMENTS; TO REQUIRE CERTAIN WARNINGS TO BE POSTED AT PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS RELATED TO SUCTION HAZARDS; TO REQUIRE OPERATORS OF PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS TO INSPECT POOLS DAILY TO ENSURE THE DRAIN COVERS ARE SECURELY ATTACHED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section, the term "public swimming pool" means any structure, chamber or tank containing an artificial body of water used by the public for swimming, diving, wading, recreation or therapy, together with buildings, appurtenances and equipment used in connection with the body of water, regardless of whether a fee is charged for its use. The term includes municipal, school, hotel, motel, apartment, boarding house, athletic club, or other membership facility pools and spas. This section does not apply to a private pool serving a single family dwelling and used only by the residents of the dwelling and their guests. This section also does not apply to therapeutic pools used in physical therapy programs operated by medical facilities licensed by the State Department of Health or operated by a licensed physical therapist, nor to therapeutic chambers drained, cleaned, and refilled after each individual use.

(2) For protection of the public health and safety, the State Board of Health shall adopt and the State Department of Health shall enforce requirements for the design, construction, depth, dimensions, and standards for the abatement of suction hazards in public swimming pools. From and after July 1, 2002,
(3) No single drain, single suction outlet public swimming pools less than eighteen (18) inches deep shall be allowed to operate.

(4) The State Department of Health shall disseminate not later than fifteen (15) days after passage of this act written information designed to adequately inform local health departments, public swimming pool operators, and the general public of the presence of the ways to avoid hazards related to suction in swimming pools.

(5) At all public swimming pools which use a single main drain for circulation of water, signs shall be posted stating: "WARNING: To prevent serious injury, do not allow children in swimming pool if drain cover is broken or missing." Signs shall be in letters at least one-half (1/2) inch in height and shall be posted where they are visible to people entering the swimming pool.

(6) Operators of all public swimming pools shall inspect pools daily to ensure the drain covers are in good condition and securely attached.

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