SENATE BILL NO. 2873
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 69-15-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO TRANSFER SUPERVISION, MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF THE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY TO THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AT MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 69-15-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

69-15-11. * * *

(1) The College of Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University of Agriculture and Applied Science shall maintain a complete and adequate veterinary diagnostic laboratory in the Jackson vicinity and any person licensed to practice veterinary medicine, veterinary surgery, veterinary dentistry, or any vocational-agriculture teacher, bona fide farmer or county agent in the State of Mississippi or agent of the State Veterinarian shall have made available to him services of the laboratory. The laboratory shall examine and conduct laboratory tests on specimens submitted by any licensed veterinarian, or vocational-agriculture teacher, bona fide farmer or county agent of this state or agent of the State Veterinarian and issue appropriate reports. The College of Veterinary Medicine shall be required to set reasonable fees for such examinations, tests, reports or other diagnostic service.

(2) The College of Veterinary Medicine shall select a director of the laboratory who holds a degree of veterinary medicine from a recognized college or university; is board certified in one (1) of the following basic diagnostic disciplines; toxicology, pathology, microbiology, virology or...
clinical pathology and has engaged in the practice of veterinary
clinical diagnosis for at least ten (10) years, five (5) years of
which were in a supervisory capacity. The director shall select
and recommend for employment such veterinarians, bacteriologists,
pathologists, technicians, clerical assistants, and other
personnel necessary to carry out the objective of this section.
The salaries, compensation and expenses of such employees shall be
sufficient to insure the employment of competent persons and shall
be paid from funds at the disposal of the Veterinary Diagnostic
Laboratory. The director shall be responsible to the College of
Veterinary Medicine for the daily operations of the laboratory.

(3) There is created an advisory council to advise the
College of Veterinary Medicine on matters concerning the
Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. The council shall be composed
of the Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, or his
designee; the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, or his
designee; the Chairman of the Board of Animal Health; the
Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce; a person appointed by
the President of Alcorn State University from its land grant staff
who is not a member of the Board of Animal Health; a licensed and
practicing veterinarian appointed by the President of the
Mississippi State Veterinary Medical Association who is not a
member of the Board of Animal Health; the State Veterinarian; the
State Chemist; and the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.
This advisory council shall meet at least twice a year, upon
written notification at least fourteen (14) days in advance, to be
called by the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine. A
meeting may also be called by the Commissioner of Agriculture or
by a majority of the advisory council with fourteen (14) days'
written notice.

The members of the advisory council shall serve in an
advisory capacity only. For attending meetings of the council,
legislators shall receive per diem and expenses which shall be
paid from the contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session; however, no per diem or expenses for attending meetings of the council shall be paid while the Legislature is in session. No per diem and expenses shall be paid except for attending meetings of the council without prior approval of the proper committee in their respective houses.

(4) All funds, property and other assets and all current positions of the diagnostic laboratory shall be transferred to the College of Veterinary Medicine on July 1, 2002. The budget of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory shall be funded as a separate line item within the general appropriation bill for the College of Veterinary Medicine.

(5) Information and records pertaining to all animal diseases within the state will be kept confidential except for those reports concerning diseases that are specifically regulated for mandatory control and eradication, or when release of such information is deemed necessary by the State Veterinarian to protect the public health, other livestock or wildlife.

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