

By: Representative Fleming

To: Public Health and Welfare

HOUSE BILL NO. 168

1 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A
2 STUDY ON THE PRESCRIBED USE OF PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS BY SCHOOL-AGE
3 CHILDREN IN THIS STATE AND THE EFFECTS OF PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS ON
4 THOSE CHILDREN, AND TO PRESENT A REPORT OF ITS STUDY TO THE
5 LEGISLATURE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature finds that:

8 (a) During the past decade the number of American
9 children receiving psychiatric drugs for behavioral and emotional
10 disorders has increased dramatically; and

11 (b) National medical reports indicate that psychiatric
12 drugs are prescribed to between five and six million children each
13 year, who represent about ten percent (10%) of the total
14 school-age population; and

15 (c) The International Narcotics Control Board of the
16 World Health Organization has reported that the United States is
17 among the leading users of psychiatric drugs and has warned us
18 against our national trend to overprescribe stimulants for
19 children; and

20 (d) Opponents of the use of psychiatric drugs express
21 concern that there is not enough information about the drugs'
22 effect on children's development or on their long-term side
23 effects, while proponents say that children sometimes need
24 medication to combat mental illnesses.

25 (2) The State Department of Health shall conduct a study on
26 the prescribed use of psychiatric drugs by school-age children in
27 this state and the effects of psychiatric drugs on those children,
28 and shall provide recommendations for improved oversight of the



29 prescribed use of psychiatric drugs among those children. The
30 department shall present a report of its study, together with any
31 recommended legislation, to the Legislature not later than
32 December 15, 2003.

33 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
34 and after July 1, 2003.

