

By: Representative Snowden

To: Apportionment and Elections

HOUSE BILL NO. 355

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PERSONS WHO APPEAR TO VOTE IN PERSON AT A
2 POLLING PLACE OR THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES BY
3 PRESENTING VALID IDENTIFICATION TO AN ELECTION MANAGER OR THE
4 REGISTRAR BEFORE THEY ARE ALLOWED TO VOTE; TO PROVIDE THAT AN
5 ELECTOR SHALL BE ALLOWED TO VOTE IF PERSONALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE
6 PERSON IDENTIFIED ON THE POLLBOOKS; TO PRESCRIBE THE TYPES OF
7 IDENTIFICATION THAT ARE VALID FOR THIS PURPOSE; TO AMEND SECTIONS
8 23-15-11, 23-15-541 AND 23-15-719, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN
9 CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11 **SECTION 1.** (1) Each person who shall appear to vote in
12 person at a polling place or the registrar's office shall be
13 required to identify himself or herself to an election manager or
14 the registrar by presenting valid identification before such
15 person shall be allowed to vote.

16 (2) Valid identification required by subsection (1) of this
17 section shall consist of the following:

- 18 (a) A valid Mississippi driver's license;
- 19 (b) A valid identification card issued by a branch,
20 department, agency or entity of the State of Mississippi;
- 21 (c) A valid United States passport;
- 22 (d) A valid employee identification card containing a
23 photograph of the elector and issued by any branch, department,
24 agency or entity of the United States government, the State of
25 Mississippi, or any county, municipality, board, authority or
26 other entity of this state;
- 27 (e) A valid employee identification card containing a
28 photograph of the elector and issued by any employer of the
29 elector in the ordinary course of the employer's business;



30 (f) A valid student identification card containing a
31 photograph of the elector from any public or private college,
32 university, or postgraduate, technical or professional school
33 located within the State of Mississippi;

34 (g) A valid Mississippi license to carry a pistol or
35 revolver;

36 (h) A valid pilot's license issued by the Federal
37 Aviation Administration or other authorized agency of the United
38 States;

39 (i) A valid United States military identification card;

40 (j) A certified copy of the elector's birth
41 certificate;

42 (k) A valid social security card;

43 (l) Certified naturalization documentation; or

44 (m) Official voter registration card.

45 (3) If an elector is unable to produce any of the items of
46 identification listed in subsection (1) of this section, he or she
47 shall be allowed to vote without undue delay if personally
48 recognized by an election manager, or the circuit clerk or deputy
49 circuit clerk in the case of absentee voting, as the person
50 identified on the pollbooks.

51 **SECTION 2.** Section 23-15-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
52 amended as follows:

53 23-15-11. Every inhabitant of this state, except idiots and
54 insane persons, who is a citizen of the United States of America,
55 eighteen (18) years old and upwards, who has resided in this state
56 for thirty (30) days and for thirty (30) days in the county in
57 which he offers to vote, and for thirty (30) days in the
58 incorporated city or town in which he offers to vote, and who
59 shall have been duly registered as an elector pursuant to Section
60 23-15-33, and who has never been convicted of any crime listed in
61 Section 241, Mississippi Constitution of 1890, shall be a
62 qualified elector in and for the county, municipality and voting



63 precinct of his residence, and shall be entitled to vote at any
64 election upon compliance with Section 1 of House Bill No. _____,
65 2003 Regular Session. Any person who will be eighteen (18) years
66 of age or older on or before the date of the general election and
67 who is duly registered to vote not less than thirty (30) days
68 prior to the primary election associated with such general
69 election, may vote in such primary election even though such
70 person has not reached his or her eighteenth birthday at the time
71 such person offers to vote at such primary election. No others
72 than those above included shall be entitled, or shall be allowed,
73 to vote at any election.

74 **SECTION 3.** Section 23-15-541, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
75 amended as follows:

76 23-15-541. At all elections, the polls shall be opened at
77 seven o'clock in the morning and be kept open until seven o'clock
78 in the evening and no longer. Upon the opening of the polls, and
79 not before, the managers of the election shall designate two (2)
80 of their number, other than the manager theretofore designated to
81 receive the blank ballots, who shall thereupon be known
82 respectively as the initialing manager and the alternate
83 initialing manager. The alternate initialing manager, in the
84 absence of the initialing manager, shall perform all of the duties
85 and undertake all of the responsibilities of the initialing
86 manager. When any person entitled to vote shall appear to vote,
87 the managers shall identify the voter by requiring the voter to
88 submit valid identification as required by Section 1 of House Bill
89 No. _____, 2003 Regular Session, and then such person shall sign his
90 name in a receipt book or booklet provided for that purpose and to
91 be used at that election only and said receipt book or booklet
92 shall be used in lieu of the list of voters who have voted
93 formerly made by the managers or clerks; whereupon and not before,
94 the initialing manager or, in his absence, the alternate
95 initialing manager shall indorse his initials on the back of an



96 official blank ballot, prepared in accordance with law, and at
97 such place on the back of the ballot that the initials may be seen
98 after the ballot has been marked and folded, and when so indorsed
99 he shall deliver it to the voter, which ballot the voter shall
100 mark in the manner provided by law, which when done the voter
101 shall deliver the same to the initialing manager or, in his
102 absence, to the alternate initialing manager, in the presence of
103 the others, and the manager shall see that the ballot so delivered
104 bears on the back thereof the genuine initials of the initialing
105 manager, or alternate initialing manager, and if so, but not
106 otherwise, the ballot shall be put into the ballot box; and when
107 so done one (1) of the managers or a duly appointed clerk shall
108 make the proper entry on the pollbook. If the voter is unable to
109 write his name on the receipt book, a manager or clerk shall note
110 on the back of the ballot that it was received for by his
111 assistance.

112 **SECTION 4.** Section 23-15-719, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
113 amended as follows:

114 23-15-719. (1) Immediately upon completion of an
115 application filed pursuant to the provisions of paragraph (a) of
116 Section 23-15-715, the registrar shall deliver the necessary
117 ballots to the applicant. The registrar shall identify the
118 applicant by requiring him to present valid identification as
119 required by Section 1 of House Bill No. , 2003 Regular Session,
120 and shall then deliver the ballots to the applicant by mail or to
121 the applicant in the registrar's office. The registrar shall not
122 personally hand deliver ballots to voters, unless he delivers the
123 ballots in the office of the registrar. The elector shall fill in
124 his ballot in secret. After the applicant has properly marked the
125 ballot and properly folded it, he shall deposit it in the envelope
126 furnished him by the registrar.

127 After he has sealed the envelope, he shall subscribe and
128 swear to an affidavit in the following form, which shall be



129 printed on the back of the envelope containing the applicant's
130 ballot:

131 "STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
132 COUNTY OF _____

133 I, _____, do solemnly swear that this envelope contains
134 the ballot marked by me indicating my choice of the candidates or
135 propositions to be submitted at the election to be held on the ____
136 day of _____, 2____, and I hereby authorize the registrar to
137 place this envelope in the ballot box on my behalf, and I further
138 authorize the election managers to open this envelope and place my
139 ballot among the other ballots cast before such ballots are
140 counted, and record my name on the poll list as if I were present
141 in person and voted.

142 I further swear that I marked the enclosed ballot in secret.

143 _____
144 (Signature of voter)

145 SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, _____, this the ____
146 day of _____, 2____.

147 (Registrar) _____
148 (Registrar) "

149 After the completion of the requirements of this section, the
150 elector shall deliver the envelope containing the ballot to the
151 registrar.

152 (2) If the voter has received assistance in marking his
153 ballot, the person providing the assistance shall complete the
154 following form which shall be printed on the back of the envelope
155 containing the applicant's ballot:

156 "CERTIFICATE OF PERSON PROVIDING VOTER ASSISTANCE

157 (To be completed only if the voter has received assistance in
158 marking the enclosed ballot.) I hereby certify that the
159 above-named voter declared to me that he or she is blind,
160 temporarily or permanently physically disabled, or cannot read or
161 write, and that the voter requested that I assist the voter in



162 marking the enclosed absentee ballot. I hereby certify that the
163 ballot preferences on the enclosed ballot are those communicated
164 by the voter to me, and that I have marked the enclosed ballot in
165 accordance with the voter's instructions.

166 _____
167 Signature of person providing assistance

168 _____
169 Printed name of person providing assistance

170 _____
171 Address of person providing assistance

172 _____
173 Date and time assistance provided

174 _____
175 Family relationship to voter (if any)"

176 (3) The envelope used pursuant to this section shall not
177 contain the form prescribed by Section 23-15-635.

178 **SECTION 5.** The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi
179 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,
180 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the
181 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States
182 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the
183 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
184 extended.

185 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
186 and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting
187 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

