

By: Representative Clark

To: Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 725

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 PROVIDE THAT THE THIRD SATURDAY IN JUNE (JUNETEENTH NATIONAL
3 FREEDOM DAY) SHALL BE DECLARED TO BE A LEGAL HOLIDAY; TO DESCRIBE
4 JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY AND ITS LEGACY; TO CLARIFY THAT
5 WHEN A LEGAL HOLIDAY FALLS ON A SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, THEN THE NEXT
6 FOLLOWING MONDAY, OR OTHER DAY FIXED BY THE PROCLAMATION BY THE
7 GOVERNOR AS THE DAY TO CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY, SHALL BE A LEGAL
8 HOLIDAY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 3-3-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)
13 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,
14 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday
15 of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King,
16 Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February (Washington's
17 birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate Memorial Day);
18 the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis'
19 birthday); the third Saturday of June (Juneteenth National Freedom
20 Day); the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the first Monday
21 of September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of November (Armistice
22 or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by proclamation by the Governor
23 of Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to
24 correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the United
25 States (Thanksgiving Day); and the twenty-fifth day of December
26 (Christmas Day). In the event any holiday hereinbefore declared
27 legal shall fall on a Saturday or Sunday, then the next following
28 Monday, or other day fixed by proclamation by the Governor as the
29 day to celebrate the holiday, shall be a legal holiday.



30 (2) In lieu of any one (1) legal holiday provided for in
31 subsection (1) of this section, with the exception of the third
32 Monday in January (Robert E. Lee's and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s
33 birthday), the governing authorities of any municipality or county
34 may declare, by order spread upon its minutes, Mardi Gras Day or
35 any one (1) other day during the year, to be a legal holiday.

36 (3) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron Presley Day in
37 recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron Presley's many
38 contributions, international recognition and the rich legacy left
39 to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be a day of
40 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal
41 holiday.

42 (4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day in
43 recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto,
44 who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by
45 Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of
46 Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's
47 One Hundred Eighty-seven-day journey from the Tombigbee River
48 basin on our state's eastern boundary, westward to the place of
49 discovery of the Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall
50 be a day of commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando
51 de Soto and European exploration and shall not be recognized as a
52 legal holiday.

53 (5) Insofar as possible, Armistice Day shall be observed by
54 appropriate exercises in all the public schools in the State of
55 Mississippi at the eleventh hour in the morning of the eleventh
56 day of the eleventh month of the year.

57 (6) Juneteenth National Freedom Day, provided for in
58 subsection (1) of this section, is the oldest African-American
59 holiday observed in the United states. It celebrates:

60 (a) The announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation
61 by United States President Abraham Lincoln issued on September 22,
62 1862, which provided that all persons held as slaves within



63 certain designated states would be declared free on January 1,
64 1863;

65 (b) The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the
66 United States Constitution on December 18, 1865, which officially
67 ended slavery in the United States of America; and

68 (c) The communication to former slaves of African
69 descent of the fact that slavery had ended, which became known
70 throughout the nation by June of 1865.

71 Juneteenth National Freedom Day commemorates and recognizes
72 the joy of former slaves when they learned of the message of their
73 freedom, and this holiday is a reminder to all Americans of the
74 contributions and legacy of Americans of African descent.

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

