HOUSE BILL NO. 1393

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 27-65-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT FINANCE CHARGES AND CARRYING CHARGES SHALL NOT BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE MEANING OF GROSS PROCEEDS OF SALES FOR PURPOSES OF THE STATE SALES TAX LAW; TO AMEND SECTION 27-67-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT FINANCE CHARGES AND CARRYING CHARGES SHALL NOT BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE MEANING OF PURCHASE PRICE OR SALES PRICE FOR PURPOSES OF THE STATE USE TAX LAW; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 27-65-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

27-65-3. The words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them herein.

(a) "Tax Commission" means the State Tax Commission of the State of Mississippi.

(b) "Commissioner" means the Chairman of the State Tax Commission.

(c) "Person" means any individual, firm, copartnership, joint venture, association, corporation, estate, trust or other group or combination acting as a unit, and includes the plural as well as the singular in number. "Person" shall include husband or wife or both where joint benefits are derived from the operation of a business taxed hereunder. "Person" shall also include any state, county, municipal or other agency or association engaging in a business taxable under this chapter.

(d) "Tax year" or "taxable year" means either the calendar year or the taxpayer's fiscal year.

(e) "Taxpayer" means any person liable for or having paid any tax to the State of Mississippi under the provisions of this chapter.
(f) "Sale" or "sales" includes the barter or exchange of property as well as the sale thereof for money or other consideration, and every closed transaction by which the title to taxable property passes shall constitute a taxable event.

"Sale" shall also include the passing of title to property for a consideration of coupons, trading stamps or by any other means when redemption is subsequent to the original sale by which the coupon, stamp or other obligation was created.

The situs of a sale for the purpose of distributing taxes to municipalities shall be the same as the location of the business from which the sale is made except that:

(i) Retail sales along a route from a vehicle or otherwise by a transient vendor shall take the situs of delivery to the customer.

(ii) The situs of wholesale sales of tangible personal property taxed at wholesale rates, the amount of which is allowed as a credit against the sales tax liability of the retailer, shall be the same as the location of the business of the retailer receiving the credit.

(iii) The situs of wholesale sales of tangible personal property taxed at wholesale rates, the amount of which is not allowed as a credit against the sales tax liability of the retailer, shall have a rural situs.

(iv) Income received from the renting or leasing of property used for transportation purposes between cities or counties shall have a rural situs.

(g) "Delivery charges" means any expenses incurred by a seller in acquiring merchandise for sale in the regular course of business commonly known as "freight-in" or "transportation costs-in." "Delivery charges" also includes any charges made by the seller for delivery of property sold to the purchaser.
(h) "Gross proceeds of sales" means the value proceeding or accruing from the full sale price of tangible personal property, including installation charges, without any deduction for delivery charges, cost of property sold, other expenses or losses, or taxes of any kind except those expressly exempt by this chapter.

Where a trade-in is taken as part payment on tangible personal property sold, "gross proceeds of sales" shall include only the difference received between the selling price of the tangible personal property and the amount allowed for a trade-in of property of the same kind. When the trade-in is subsequently sold, the selling price thereof shall be included in "gross proceeds of sales."

"Gross proceeds of sales" includes the value of any goods, wares, merchandise or property purchased at wholesale or manufactured, and any mineral or natural resources produced which are excluded from the tax levied by Section 27-65-15, which are withdrawn or used from an established business or from the stock in trade for consumption or any other use in the business or by the owner.

"Gross proceeds of sales" shall not include bad check or draft service charges as provided for in Section 97-19-57.

"Gross proceeds of sales" does not include finance charges, carrying charges or any other addition to the selling price as a result of deferred payments by the purchaser.

(i) "Gross income" means the total charges for service or the total receipts (actual or accrued) derived from trades, business or commerce by reason of the investment of capital in the business engaged in, including the sale or rental of tangible personal property, compensation for labor and services performed, and including the receipts from the sales of property retained as toll, without any deduction for rebates, cost of property sold,
cost of materials used, labor costs, interest paid, losses or any
expense whatever.

"Gross income" shall also include the cost of property given
as compensation when said property is consumed by a person
performing a taxable service for the donor.

However, "gross income" or "gross proceeds of sales" shall
not be construed to include the value of goods returned by
customers when the total sale price is refunded either in cash or
by credit, or cash discounts allowed and taken on sales. Cash
discounts shall not include the value of trading stamps given with
a sale of property.

(j) "Tangible personal property" means personal
property perceptible to the human senses or by chemical analysis
as opposed to real property or intangibles and shall include
property sold on an installed basis which may become a part of
real or personal property.

(k) "Installation charges" means the charge
for the application of tangible personal property to real or
personal property without regard to whether or not it becomes a
part of the real property or retains its personal property
classification. It shall include, but not be limited to, sales in
place of roofing, tile, glass, carpets, drapes, fences, awnings,
window air conditioning units, gasoline pumps, window guards,
floor coverings, carports, store fixtures, aluminum and plastic
siding, tombstones and similar personal property.

(l) "Newspaper" means a periodical which:

   (i) Is not published primarily for advertising
purposes and has not contained more than seventy-five percent
(75%) advertising in more than one-half (1/2) of its issues during
any consecutive twelve-month period excluding separate advertising
supplements inserted into but separately identifiable from any
regular issue or issues;
(ii) Has been established and published continuously for at least twelve (12) months;
(iii) Is regularly issued at stated intervals no less frequently than once a week, bears a date of issue, and is numbered consecutively; provided, however, that publication on legal holidays of this state or of the United States and on Saturdays and Sundays shall not be required, and failure to publish not more than two (2) regular issues in any calendar year shall not exclude a periodical from this definition;
(iv) Is issued from a known office of publication, which shall be the principal public business office of the newspaper and need not be the place at which the periodical is printed and a newspaper shall be deemed to be "published" at the place where its known office of publication is located;
(v) Is formed of printed sheets; provided, however, that a periodical that is reproduced by the stencil, mimeograph or hectograph process shall not be considered to be a "newspaper"; and
(vi) Is originated and published for the dissemination of current news and intelligence of varied, broad and general public interest, announcements and notices, opinions as editorials on a regular or irregular basis, and advertising and miscellaneous reading matter.

The term "newspaper" shall include periodicals which are designed primarily for free circulation or for circulation at nominal rates as well as those which are designed for circulation at more than a nominal rate.

The term "newspaper" shall not include a publication or periodical which is published, sponsored by, is directly supported financially by, or is published to further the interests of, or is directed to, or has a circulation restricted in whole or in part to any particular sect, denomination, labor or fraternal organization or other special group or class or citizens.
For purposes of this paragraph, a periodical designed primarily for free circulation or circulation at nominal rates shall not be considered to be a newspaper unless such periodical has made an application for such status to the Tax Commission in the manner prescribed by the commission and has provided to the Tax Commission documentation satisfactory to the commission showing that such periodical meets the requirements of the definition of the term "newspaper." However, if such periodical has been determined to be a newspaper under action taken by the State Tax Commission on or before April 11, 1996, such periodical shall be considered to be a newspaper without the necessity of applying for such status. A determination by the State Tax Commission that a publication is a newspaper shall be limited to the application of this chapter and shall not establish that the publication is a newspaper for any other purpose.

SECTION 2. Section 27-67-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

27-67-3. Whenever used in this article, the words, phrases and terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them as follows:

(a) "Tax Commission" means the State Tax Commission of the State of Mississippi.
(b) "Commissioner" means the Chairman of the State Tax Commission.
(c) "Person" means any individual, firm, partnership, joint venture, association, corporation, estate, trust, receiver, syndicate or any other group or combination acting as a unit and includes the plural as well as the singular in number. "Person" shall also include husband or wife, or both, where joint benefits are derived from the operation of a business taxed hereunder or where joint benefits are derived from the use of property taxed hereunder.
(d) "Taxpayer" means any person liable for the payment of any tax hereunder, or liable for the collection and payment of the tax.

(e) "Sale" or "purchase" means the exchange of properties for money or other consideration, and the barter of properties. Every closed transaction by which title to, or possession of, tangible personal property passes shall constitute a taxable event. A transaction whereby the possession of property is transferred but the seller retains title as security for payment of the selling price shall be deemed a sale.

(f) "Purchase price" or "sales price" means the total amount for which tangible personal property is purchased or sold, valued in money, including installation and service charges, and freight charges to the point of use within this state, without any deduction for cost of property sold, expenses or losses, or taxes of any kind except those exempt by the sales tax law. "Purchase price" or "sales price" shall not include cash discounts allowed and taken or merchandise returned by customers when the total sales price is refunded either in cash or by credit, and shall not include amounts allowed for a trade-in of similar property. "Purchase price" or "sales price" does not include finance charges, carrying charges or any other addition to the selling price as a result of deferred payments by the purchaser.

(g) "Lease" or "rent" means any agreement entered into for a consideration that transfers possession or control of tangible personal property to a person for use within this state.

(h) "Value" means the estimated or assessed monetary worth of a thing or property. The value of property transferred into this state for sales promotion or advertising shall be an amount not less than the cost paid by the transferor or donor. The value of property which has been used in another state shall be determined by its cost less straight line depreciation provided that value shall never be less than twenty percent (20%) of the
cost or other method acceptable to the commissioner. On property
imported by the manufacturer thereof for rental or lease within
this state, value shall be the manufactured cost of the property
and freight to the place of use in Mississippi.

(i) "Tangible personal property" means personal
property perceptible to the human senses or by chemical analysis,
as opposed to real property or intangibles. "Tangible personal
property" shall include printed, mimeographed, multigraphed
matter, or material reproduced in any other manner, and books,
catalogs, manuals, publications or similar documents covering the
services of collecting, compiling or analyzing information of any
kind or nature. However, reports representing the work of persons
such as lawyers, accountants, engineers and similar professionals
shall not be included. "Tangible personal property" shall also
include tangible advertising or sales promotion materials such as,
but not limited to, displays, brochures, signs, catalogs, price
lists, point of sale advertising materials and technical manuals.
Tangible personal property shall also include computer software
programs.

(j) "Person doing business in this state," "person
maintaining a place of business within this state," or any similar
term means any person having within this state an office, a
distribution house, a salesroom or house, a warehouse, or any
other place of business, or owning personal property located in
this state used by another person, or installing personal property
in this state. This definition also includes any person selling
or taking orders for any tangible personal property, either
personally, by mail or through an employee representative,
salesman, commission agent, canvasser, solicitor or independent
contractor or by any other means from within the state.

Any person doing business under the terms of the article by
reason of coming under any one or more of the qualifying
provisions listed above shall be considered as doing business on all transactions involving sales to persons within this state.

(k) "Use" or "consumption" means the first use or intended use within this state of tangible personal property and shall include rental or loan by owners or use by lessees or other persons receiving benefits from use of the property. "Use" or "consumption" shall include the benefit realized or to be realized by persons importing or causing to be imported into this state tangible advertising or sales promotion materials.

(l) "Storage" means keeping tangible personal property in this state for subsequent use or consumption in this state.

SECTION 3. Nothing in this act shall affect or defeat any claim, assessment, appeal, suit, right or cause of action for taxes due or accrued under the sales tax laws or use tax laws before the date on which this act becomes effective, whether such claims, assessments, appeals, suits or actions have been begun before the date on which this act becomes effective or are begun thereafter; and the provisions of the sales tax laws and use tax laws are expressly continued in full force, effect and operation for the purpose of the assessment, collection and enrollment of liens for any taxes due or accrued and the execution of any warrant under such laws before the date on which this act becomes effective, and for the imposition of any penalties, forfeitures or claims for failure to comply with such laws.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2003.