

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Education;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2397

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-31-205, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO UTILIZE  
3 APPROPRIATE STAFF TO PERFORM SERVICES FOR VOCATIONAL STUDENT  
4 ORGANIZATIONS AND TO EXPEND VOCATIONAL FUNDS FOR RELATED COSTS;  
5 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-31-205, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
8 amended as follows:

9 37-31-205. (1) The State Board of Education shall have the  
10 authority to:

11 (a) Expend funds received either by appropriation or  
12 directly from federal or private sources;

13 (b) Channel funds to secondary schools, community and  
14 junior colleges and regional vocational-technical facilities  
15 according to priorities set by the board;

16 (c) Allocate funds on an annual budgetary basis;

17 (d) Set standards for and approve all vocational and  
18 technical education programs in the public school system and  
19 community and junior colleges or other agencies or institutions  
20 which receive state funds and federal funds for such purposes,  
21 including, but not limited to, the following vocational and  
22 technical education programs: agriculture, trade and industry,  
23 occupational home economics, consumer and homemaking education,  
24 distributive education, business and office, health, industrial  
25 arts, guidance services, technical education, cooperative  
26 education, and all other specialized training not requiring a  
27 bachelors degree, with the exception of programs of nursing  
28 education regulated under the provisions of Section 37-129-1. The



29 State Board of Education shall authorize local school boards,  
30 within such school board's discretion, to offer distributive  
31 education as a one-hour or two-hour block course. There shall be  
32 no reduction of payments from state funding for distributive  
33 education due to the selection of either the one-hour or two-hour  
34 course offering;

35 (e) Set and publish licensure standards for vocational  
36 and technical education personnel. The State Board of Education  
37 shall recognize a vocational and technical education teacher's  
38 work when school is not in session which is in the teacher's  
39 particular field of instruction as a means for the teacher to  
40 fulfill the requirements for renewal of the teacher's license.  
41 The board shall establish, by rules and regulations, the  
42 documentation of such work which must be submitted to the board  
43 and the number of actual working hours required to fulfill renewal  
44 requirements. If a vocational and technical education teacher who  
45 does not have a bachelor's degree takes classes in fulfillment of  
46 licensure renewal requirements, such classes must be in  
47 furtherance of a bachelor's degree;

48 (f) Require data and information on program performance  
49 from those programs receiving state funds;

50 (g) Expend funds to expand career information;

51 (h) Supervise and maintain the Division of Vocational  
52 and Technical Education and to utilize, to the greatest extent  
53 possible, the division as the administrative unit of the board  
54 responsible for coordinating programs and services with local  
55 institutions;

56 (i) Utilize appropriate staff of the State Department  
57 of Education to perform services for the vocational student  
58 organizations, including, but not limited to, procurement,  
59 accounting services, tax services and banking services. The  
60 department may also procure and pay for annual audits of the  
61 vocational student organizations using vocational funds or other



62 available funds of the State Department of Education. It is the  
63 intent of this provision that any related costs be paid with  
64 vocational funds appropriated by the Legislature.

65 (j) Promulgate such rules and regulations necessary to  
66 carry out the provisions of this chapter in accordance with  
67 Section 25-43-1 et seq.;

68 (k) Set standards and approve all vocational and  
69 technical education equipment and facilities purchased and/or  
70 leased with state and federal vocational funds;

71 (l) Encourage provisions for lifelong learning and  
72 changing personal career preferences and advancement of vocational  
73 and technical education students through articulated programs  
74 between high schools and community and junior colleges;

75 (m) Encourage the establishment of new linkages with  
76 business and industry which will provide for a better  
77 understanding of essential labor market concepts;

78 (n) Periodically review the funding and reporting  
79 processes required of local school districts by the board or  
80 division with the aim of simplifying or eliminating inefficient  
81 practices and procedures;

82 (o) Assist in the development of high technology  
83 programs and resource centers to support current and projected  
84 industrial needs;

85 (p) Assist in the development of a technical assistance  
86 program for business and industry which will provide for  
87 industrial training and services, including the transfer of  
88 information relative to new applications and advancements in  
89 technology; and

90 (q) Enter into contracts and agreements with the State  
91 Board for Community and Junior Colleges for conditions under which  
92 vocational and technical education programs in community and  
93 junior colleges shall receive state and federal funds which flow  
94 through the State Board of Education for such purposes.



95           (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that no vocational  
96 and technical education course or program existing on June 30,  
97 1982, shall be eliminated by the State Board of Education under  
98 the authority vested in paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this  
99 section prior to June 30, 1985. It is further the intent of the  
100 Legislature that no vocational and technical education teacher or  
101 other personnel employed on June 30, 1983, shall be discharged due  
102 to licensure standards promulgated by the board under paragraph  
103 (e) of subsection (1) of this section, if any such teacher or  
104 personnel shall have complied with any newly published licensure  
105 standards by June 30, 1985. Nothing contained in this section  
106 shall be construed to abrogate or affect in any manner the  
107 authority of local public school districts or community and junior  
108 colleges to eliminate vocational and technical education courses  
109 or programs or to discharge any vocational and technical education  
110 teacher or other personnel.

111           (3) The State Board of Education and the State Board for  
112 Community and Junior Colleges may provide that every vocational  
113 and technical education course or program in Mississippi may  
114 integrate academic and vocational-technical education through  
115 coherent sequences of courses, so that students in such programs  
116 achieve both academic and occupational competencies. The boards  
117 may expend federal funds available from the 1990 Perkins Act, or  
118 other available federal funds, for the alignment of  
119 vocational-technical programs with academic programs through the  
120 accreditation process and the teacher licensure process.

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

