

By: Senator(s) Michel

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2591

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A STUDY COMMITTEE ON CREATING A
2 MISSISSIPPI HELPING OUTSTANDING PUPILS EDUCATIONALLY (MHOPE)
3 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; TO DIRECT THE STUDY COMMITTEE TO SUBMIT A
4 WRITTEN REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE
5 LEGISLATURE BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2003; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is established a study committee on
8 creating a Mississippi Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally
9 (MHOPE) scholarship program to study and make recommendations to
10 the Legislature on the establishment and implementation of a
11 program of free college tuition in the State of Mississippi for
12 highly achieving Mississippi students. The committee shall make a
13 report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature
14 before December 1, 2003.

15 (2) The committee shall examine the Helping Outstanding
16 Pupils Educationally (HOPE) scholarship program in the State of
17 Georgia and similar programs that have been implemented in other
18 states in order to gain a full understanding of such programs. In
19 its report to the Legislature, the committee shall include
20 recommended modifications, if any, which should be made to the
21 Georgia HOPE program for MHOPE and suggestions on the possible
22 integration of currently existing scholarship and tuition
23 assistance programs in Mississippi with MHOPE. The report must
24 include a fiscal note on the projected costs of MHOPE, and the
25 committee shall identify possible revenue streams for funding the
26 program.

27 (3) The study committee shall be composed of the following
28 fifteen (15) members:



- 29 (a) The Chairmen of the House Universities and
30 Colleges, Education and Appropriations Committees;
- 31 (b) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives
32 appointed by the Speaker of the House, or their designees from the
33 House membership;
- 34 (c) The Chairmen of the Senate Universities and
35 Colleges, Education and Appropriations Committees;
- 36 (d) Two (2) members of the Senate appointed by the
37 Lieutenant Governor, or their designees from the Senate
38 membership;
- 39 (e) The Commissioner of Higher Education or his
40 designee;
- 41 (f) The State Superintendent of Public Education or his
42 designee;
- 43 (g) The President of the Board of Trustees of State
44 Institutions of Higher Learning or his designee from the board;
- 45 (h) The President of State Board for Community and
46 Junior Colleges or his designee from the board; and
- 47 (i) A representative of a local district of Rotary
48 International or his designee.

49 In making their legislative appointments, the Lieutenant
50 Governor and Speaker of the House shall endeavor to achieve a
51 diverse representation, with all geographical areas of the state
52 being represented on the committee.

53 (4) If any chairman of a legislative committee serving on
54 the study committee is unable to attend any meeting of the
55 committee, the vice chairman of the respective committee may
56 attend and vote at such meeting. Appointments shall be made
57 within thirty (30) days after passage of this act. Within fifteen
58 (15) days thereafter, on a day to be designated jointly by the
59 Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor, the study
60 committee shall meet and organize by selecting from its membership
61 a chairman and vice chairman. The vice chairman shall serve as



62 secretary and shall be responsible for keeping all records of the
63 study committee. A majority of the members of the study committee
64 shall constitute a quorum. In the selection of its officers and
65 the adoption of rules, resolutions and reports, an affirmative
66 vote of a majority of the study committee is required. All
67 members shall be notified in writing of all meetings, and such
68 notices must be mailed at least five (5) days before the date on
69 which a meeting is to be held.

70 (5) Subject to the availability of funds, for attending
71 meetings of the study committee, members who are not legislators
72 shall be compensated at the per diem rate authorized by Section
73 25-3-69, Mississippi Code of 1972, and shall be reimbursed in
74 accordance with Section 25-3-41, Mississippi Code of 1972, for
75 mileage and actual expenses incurred in attending meetings of the
76 committee. Each legislative member of the committee shall be paid
77 from the contingent expense fund of his respective house per diem
78 in the amount authorized by Section 25-3-69, Mississippi Code of
79 1972, and a mileage allowance and an expense allowance in the
80 amount authorized by Section 5-1-47, Mississippi Code of 1972.
81 However, no per diem, mileage allowance or expense allowance may
82 be paid for attending meetings of the committee while the
83 Legislature is in session, and no per diem, mileage allowance or
84 expense allowance may be paid without prior approval of the proper
85 committee in the member's respective house. Any member who is
86 also a state employee shall not be eligible to receive per diem
87 compensation. No study committee member may incur per diem,
88 travel or other expenses unless previously authorized by vote, at
89 a meeting of the study committee, which action must be recorded in
90 the official minutes of the meeting. Nonlegislative members may
91 be paid from any funds made available to the study committee for
92 that purpose.

93 (6) The study committee may employ consultants or staff and
94 may utilize clerical and legal staff employed by the Board of



95 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, the Office of
96 the Governor, the Legislature and any other staff assistance made
97 available to the committee.

98 (7) Funding for the study committee may be provided from any
99 funds that may be appropriated by the Legislature for the expenses
100 of the study committee. The study committee may accept money from
101 any source, public or private, to be expended in implementing its
102 duties under this act.

103 (8) Upon presentation of its report to the Legislature
104 before the 2004 Regular Session, the study committee shall be
105 dissolved.

106 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
107 and after its passage.

