AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF BONUSES TO MISSISSIPPI
SERVICEMEN AND SERVICEWOMEN WHO SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY IN WORLD WAR
II OR THE KOREAN WAR, AND TO THE SURVIVING SPOUSES OF SUCH
SERVICEMEN AND SERVICEWOMEN; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS
THERETO; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Bonuses shall be paid out of any funds
appropriated by the Legislature for this purpose to servicemen and
ex-servicemen and servicewomen and ex-servicewomen who served on
active duty in World War II or the Korean War, and who were
citizens of the State of Mississippi when inducted into active
service and certain surviving spouses of such servicemen and
servicewomen, such payments of bonuses to be in the amounts and
subject to the conditions set forth as follows:

(a) To each such serviceman or servicewoman who served
in World War II or the Korean War, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars
($500.00);

(b) To the surviving spouse of each such serviceman or
servicewoman who died while serving in World War II or the Korean
War, or who died at any time after having served in World War II
or the Korean War as a result of injuries or wounds received or
disease contracted by him while in World War II or the Korean War,
the sum of Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00), provided that no such
bonus shall be paid to any surviving spouse who has remarried.

(2) If there is no surviving serviceman or servicewoman or
surviving unmarried spouse, then no bonus shall be paid. In
addition, the Five Hundred Dollar ($500.00) payment specified
herein shall be reduced by any other amount paid under the provisions of this section.

(3) No such bonus shall be paid to any serviceman or servicewoman who has been separated from service without an honorable discharge or an honorable separation therefrom, nor to the surviving spouse of such a serviceman or servicewoman.

(4) No such bonus shall be paid to any serviceman or servicewoman, or to the surviving spouse of any such serviceman or servicewoman, unless a claim therefor is filed in writing with the Department of Veterans' Affairs on or before July 1, 2007.

(5) If any serviceman or servicewoman or surviving spouse herein entitled to a bonus or payment has received a bonus or gratuitous payment from any other state, territory or governmental authority, other than the government of the United States, prior to making application hereunder, then the amount of the bonus or gratuitous payment so received shall be deducted from the amount provided herein to be paid to each such person.

(6) The bonuses and payments provided herein shall be completely exempt from all liability for any debt, tax or obligation. This exemption cannot be waived. Such bonus or payment shall be nonassignable and shall not be subject to pledge or hypothecation in any manner whatsoever.

(7) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall have responsibility for the administration of this section. The executive director is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations as necessary for the distribution of the bonuses and for the proper administration of this section.

(8) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall estimate the amount necessary to pay such claims and administer this section, and shall include that amount as a separate item in its budget request submitted for fiscal year 2004 and for each fiscal year thereafter during the five-year time limit to make a claim for a bonus.
SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2003.