

By: Representative Rotenberry

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 334

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-20.1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO REDUCE FROM TWELVE YEARS TO TEN YEARS THE MINIMUM AGE OF  
3 CHILDREN WHO ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE A HUNTER EDUCATION COURSE  
4 AND WHO MUST BE SUPERVISED BY AN ADULT WHEN ENGAGED IN HUNTING  
5 ACTIVITIES; TO PRESCRIBE CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; AND  
6 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-20.1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
9 amended as follows:

10 49-7-20.1. (1) To reduce hunting accidents of children  
11 under license age, to protect the safety of these children and to  
12 promote hunter safety, a child at least ten (10) years of age and  
13 under sixteen (16) years of age must have a certificate of  
14 satisfactory completion of a hunter education course approved by  
15 the department before hunting in this state.

16 (2) A child under the age of ten (10) must be in the  
17 presence and under the direct supervision of a licensed or exempt  
18 hunter at least twenty-one (21) years of age when the child is  
19 hunting.

20 (3) A violation of subsection (1) or subsection (2) of this  
21 section shall be punished as follows:

22 (a) For conviction of a first offense:

23 (i) The parents or legal guardian of the child may  
24 be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00);

25 (ii) The child shall be required to attend and  
26 satisfactorily complete a hunter education course approved by the  
27 Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks; and

28 (iii) The child shall be warned of the penalty for  
29 a second violation.

30           (b) For conviction of a second offense, the offenses  
31 being committed within three (3) years:

32           (i) The parents or legal guardian of the child  
33 shall be fined not more than One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars  
34 (\$1,500.00);

35           (ii) The child shall be required to attend and  
36 satisfactorily complete a hunter education course approved by the  
37 Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and/or required to  
38 satisfactorily complete thirty (30) hours of community service;  
39 and

40           (iii) The child shall be warned of the penalty for  
41 a third violation.

42           (c) For conviction of a third offense, the offenses  
43 being committed within three (3) years:

44           (i) The parents or legal guardian of the child  
45 shall be fined Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00);

46           (ii) The child shall be required to satisfactorily  
47 complete sixty (60) hours of community service; and

48           (iii) All firearms, equipment and vehicles not  
49 authorized for operation on public roadways, that were used in the  
50 hunt shall be seized and forfeited.

51           (d) For conviction of a fourth or subsequent offense,  
52 the offenses being committed within three (3) years:

53           (i) The parents or legal guardian of the child  
54 shall be fined Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00); and

55           (ii) All firearms, equipment and vehicles not  
56 authorized for operation on public roadways, that were used in the  
57 hunt shall be seized and forfeited.

58           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
59 and after July 1, 2004.