

By: Representative Robinson (84th)

To: Judiciary B

HOUSE BILL NO. 501

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 97-3-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE JUSTIFICATION FOR HOMICIDES THAT ARE COMMITTED BY PREGNANT  
3 WOMEN IN ORDER TO PROTECT UNBORN FETUSES DURING ANY PHASE OF  
4 PREGNANCY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 97-3-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
7 amended as follows:

8 97-3-15. (1) The killing of a human being by the act,  
9 procurement, or omission of another shall be justifiable in the  
10 following cases:

11 (a) When committed by public officers, or those acting  
12 by their aid and assistance, in obedience to any judgment of a  
13 competent court;

14 (b) When necessarily committed by public officers, or  
15 those acting by their command in their aid and assistance, in  
16 overcoming actual resistance to the execution of some legal  
17 process, or to the discharge of any other legal duty;

18 (c) When necessarily committed by public officers, or  
19 those acting by their command in their aid and assistance, in  
20 retaking any felon who has been rescued or has escaped;

21 (d) When necessarily committed by public officers, or  
22 those acting by their command in their aid and assistance, in  
23 arresting any felon fleeing from justice;

24 (e) When committed by any person in resisting any  
25 attempt unlawfully to kill such person or to commit any felony  
26 upon him, or upon or in any dwelling house in which such person  
27 shall be;

28           (f) When committed in the lawful defense of one's own  
29 person or any other human being, where there shall be reasonable  
30 ground to apprehend a design to commit a felony or to do some  
31 great personal injury, and there shall be imminent danger of such  
32 design being accomplished;

33           (g) When necessarily committed in attempting by lawful  
34 ways and means to apprehend any person for any felony committed;

35           (h) When necessarily committed in lawfully suppressing  
36 any riot or in lawfully keeping and preserving the peace;

37           (i) When committed by a pregnant woman in order to  
38 protect her unborn fetus during any phase of her pregnancy,  
39 regardless of whether the life of the pregnant woman is in danger.

40           (2) As used in paragraphs (1)(c) and (1)(d) of this section,  
41 the term "when necessarily committed" means that a public officer  
42 or a person acting by or at the officer's command, aid or  
43 assistance is authorized to use such force as necessary in  
44 securing and detaining the felon offender, overcoming the  
45 offender's resistance, preventing the offender's escape,  
46 recapturing the offender if the offender escapes or in protecting  
47 himself or others from bodily harm; but such officer or person  
48 shall not be authorized to resort to deadly or dangerous means  
49 when to do so would be unreasonable under the circumstances. The  
50 public officer or person acting by or at the officer's command may  
51 act upon a reasonable apprehension of the surrounding  
52 circumstances; however, such officer or person shall not use  
53 excessive force or force that is greater than reasonably necessary  
54 in securing and detaining the offender, overcoming the offender's  
55 resistance, preventing the offender's escape, recapturing the  
56 offender if the offender escapes or in protecting himself or  
57 others from bodily harm.

58           (3) As used in paragraphs (1)(c) and (1)(d) of this section  
59 the term "felon" shall include an offender who has been convicted  
60 of a felony and shall also include an offender who is in custody,

61 or whose custody is being sought, on a charge or for an offense  
62 which is punishable, upon conviction, by death or confinement in  
63 the penitentiary.

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