

By: Representatives Bondurant, Barnett,
Masterson, Flaggs, Scott

To: Public Health and Human
Services; Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1046

1 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO PREPARE A
2 STATEWIDE HEPATITIS C VIRUS PLAN BEFORE JULY 1, 2007; AND FOR
3 RELATED PURPOSES.

4 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is a silent killer that is largely
5 asymptomatic until irreversible liver damage occurs; and

6 WHEREAS, infecting approximately four million five hundred
7 thousand (4,500,000) people in the United States, with thirty-five
8 thousand (35,000) new infections each year, Hepatitis C is
9 referred to as the "silent epidemic"; and

10 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C infects three times more people than
11 does AIDS, and is responsible for one-third (1/3) of all liver
12 transplants; and

13 WHEREAS, being one (1) of the most significant preventable
14 and treatable public health problems facing our nation today,
15 Hepatitis C may be carried by individuals who expose others to the
16 virus for more than twenty (20) years without showing any
17 symptoms; and

18 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C does not have a vaccine, and as a
19 result, emphasis must be placed on other means of awareness and
20 prevention of this disease, including, but not limited to,
21 educating individuals who are at high risk for contracting
22 Hepatitis C, law enforcement officers, fire fighters, health care
23 workers and the general public; and

24 WHEREAS, educating the public and health care community
25 throughout the state about Hepatitis C will help to ensure an
26 optimal approach to controlling this lethal disease; NOW,
27 THEREFORE,

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

29 **SECTION 1.** Not later than July 1, 2007, the State Department
30 of Health, in collaboration with the University of Mississippi
31 Medical Center and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, shall
32 prepare and deliver to the Legislature a statewide Hepatitis C
33 Virus plan.

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