

By: Representative Straughter

To: Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1405

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 PROVIDE THAT THE THIRD SATURDAY IN JUNE SHALL BE DECLARED TO BE
3 JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY; TO PROVIDE THAT THIS DAY SHALL
4 NOT BE RECOGNIZED AS A LEGAL HOLIDAY, BUT SHALL BE A DAY OF
5 COMMEMORATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

9 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)
10 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,
11 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday
12 of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King,
13 Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February (Washington's
14 birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate Memorial Day);
15 the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis'
16 birthday); the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the first
17 Monday of September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of November
18 (Armistice or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by proclamation by the
19 Governor of Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be
20 fixed to correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the
21 United States (Thanksgiving Day); and the twenty-fifth day of
22 December (Christmas Day). In the event any holiday hereinbefore
23 declared legal shall fall on Sunday, then the next following day
24 shall be a legal holiday.

25 (2) In lieu of any one (1) legal holiday provided for in
26 subsection (1) of this section, with the exception of the third
27 Monday in January (Robert E. Lee's and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s
28 birthday), the governing authorities of any municipality or county

29 may declare, by order spread upon its minutes, Mardi Gras Day or
30 any one (1) other day during the year, to be a legal holiday.

31 (3) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron Presley Day in
32 recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron Presley's many
33 contributions, international recognition and the rich legacy left
34 to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be a day of
35 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal
36 holiday.

37 (4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando De Soto Day in
38 recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando De Soto,
39 who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by
40 Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of
41 Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's
42 187-day journey from the Tombigbee River basin on our state's
43 eastern boundary, westward to the place of discovery of the
44 Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall be a day of
45 commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando De Soto and
46 European exploration and shall not be recognized as a legal
47 holiday.

48 (5) Insofar as possible, Armistice Day shall be observed by
49 appropriate exercises in all the public schools in the State of
50 Mississippi at the eleventh hour in the morning of the eleventh
51 day of the eleventh month of the year.

52 (6) The third Saturday of June is declared to be Juneteenth
53 National Freedom Day, in recognition of the oldest
54 African-American holiday observed in the United states. This day
55 celebrates:

56 (a) The announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation
57 by United States President Abraham Lincoln issued on September 22,
58 1862, which provided that all persons held as slaves within
59 certain designated states would be declared free on January 1,
60 1863;

61 (b) The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the
62 United States Constitution on December 18, 1865, which officially
63 ended slavery in the United States of America; and

64 (c) The communication to former slaves of African
65 descent of the fact that slavery had ended, which became known
66 throughout the nation by June of 1865.

67 Juneteenth National Freedom Day commemorates and recognizes
68 the joy of former slaves when they learned of the message of their
69 freedom, and this holiday is a reminder to all Americans of the
70 contributions and legacy of Americans of African descent. This
71 day shall be a day of commemoration and observation, and it shall
72 not be recognized as a legal holiday.

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