

**REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**

**MADAM PRESIDENT AND MR. SPEAKER:**

We, the undersigned conferees, have had under consideration the amendments to the following entitled BILL:

S. B. No. 3143: Appropriation; Veterans Affairs Bd.

We, therefore, respectfully submit the following report and recommendation:

- 1. That the House recede from its Amendment No. 1.
- 2. That the Senate and House adopt the following amendment:

Amend by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

4       **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
5 necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the State  
6 General Fund not otherwise appropriated, for the purpose of  
7 defraying the expenses and paying salaries of the Veterans Affairs  
8 Board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2004, and ending  
9 June 30, 2005..... \$       1,355,025.00.

10       **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
11 necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the special  
12 fund in the State Treasury to the credit of the Veterans Affairs  
13 Board which is comprised of special source funds collected by or  
14 otherwise available to the board, for the support and maintenance  
15 of said board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2004, and  
16 ending June 30, 2005 ..... \$       26,822,997.00.

17       **SECTION 3.** With the funds appropriated under the provisions  
18 of Sections 1 and 2, the following positions are authorized:

AUTHORIZED POSITIONS:

20	Permanent:	Full Time .....	80
21		Part Time .....	0
22	Time-Limited:	Full Time .....	620
23		Part Time .....	100

24       With the funds herein appropriated, it is the intention of  
25 the Legislature that it shall be the agency's responsibility to

26 make certain that funds required to be appropriated for "Personal  
27 Services" for Fiscal Year 2006 do not exceed Fiscal Year 2005  
28 funds appropriated for that purpose, unless programs or positions  
29 are added to the agency's Fiscal Year 2006 budget by the  
30 Mississippi Legislature. Based on data provided by the  
31 Legislative Budget Office, the State Personnel Board shall  
32 determine and publish the projected annual cost to fully fund all  
33 appropriated positions in compliance with the provisions of this  
34 act. It shall be the responsibility of the agency head to insure  
35 that no single personnel action increases this projected annual  
36 cost and/or the Fiscal Year 2005 appropriation for "Personal  
37 Services" when annualized, with the exception of escalated funds.  
38 If, at the time the agency takes any action to change "Personal  
39 Services," the State Personnel Board determines that the agency  
40 has taken an action which would cause the agency to exceed this  
41 projected annual cost or the Fiscal Year 2005 "Personal Services"  
42 appropriated level, when annualized, then only those actions which  
43 reduce the projected annual cost and/or the appropriation  
44 requirement will be processed by the State Personnel Board until  
45 such time as the requirements of this provision are met.

46 Any transfers or escalations shall be made in accordance with  
47 the terms, conditions and procedures established by law or  
48 allowable under the terms set forth within this act. The State  
49 Personnel Board shall not escalate positions without written  
50 approval from the Department of Finance and Administration. The  
51 Department of Finance and Administration shall not provide written  
52 approval to escalate any funds for salaries and/or positions  
53 without proof of availability of new or additional funds above the  
54 appropriated level.

55 No general funds authorized to be expended herein shall be  
56 used to replace federal funds and/or other special funds which are

57 being used for salaries authorized under the provisions of this  
58 act and which are withdrawn and no longer available.

59 The agency shall not award salary increases through  
60 reallocation, reclassification, realignment, education benchmark,  
61 or career ladder.

62 **SECTION 4.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of  
63 Sections 1 and 2, funds in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty  
64 Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) are provided to defray the cost of  
65 providing care to indigent/low-income Mississippi veterans and the  
66 non-veteran surviving spouses of Mississippi veterans if the  
67 surviving spouse was a resident of a state veterans home at the  
68 time of the veteran's death and who, subsequent to the veteran's  
69 death, meets the indigent/low-income criteria established by the  
70 State Veterans Affairs Board, in the state veterans homes. It is  
71 the intention of the Legislature that the provision pertaining to  
72 use of indigent/low-income surviving spouses be retroactive for  
73 any such period, prior to the effective date of this act, that a  
74 current surviving spouse may have met the criteria. This section  
75 and its provisions shall be known and cited as the "Hilton R.  
76 'Jack' Vance Act of 1997."

77 **SECTION 5.** Of the funds appropriated under the provisions of  
78 Section 2, Six Hundred Twenty-one Thousand Four Hundred Seventy-  
79 two Dollars (\$621,472.00) shall be derived from the Health Care  
80 Expendable Fund created in Section 43-13-407, Mississippi Code of  
81 1972, for the support and maintenance of the Veterans' Affairs  
82 Board.

83 **SECTION 6.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the  
84 Veterans Affairs Board shall maintain complete accounting and  
85 personnel records related to the expenditure of all funds  
86 appropriated under the provisions of this act and that such  
87 records shall be in the same format and level of details as  
88 maintained for Fiscal Year 2004. It is further the intention of

89 the Legislature that the budget request for Fiscal Year 2006 shall  
90 be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format  
91 and level of detail comparable to the format and level of detail  
92 provided during the Fiscal Year 2005 budget request process.

93 **SECTION 7.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by  
94 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the  
95 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon  
96 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer; and the State Fiscal  
97 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the  
98 proper person, officer or officers in the manner provided by law.

99 **SECTION 8.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
100 and after July 1, 2004.

CONFEREES FOR THE SENATE

X (SIGNED)  
Jack Gordon

X (SIGNED)  
Hillman Terome Frazier

X (SIGNED)  
Bennie L. Turner

CONFEREES FOR THE HOUSE

X (SIGNED)  
Johnny W. Stringer

X (SIGNED)  
Joseph L. Warren

X (SIGNED)  
Jack Gadd