

April 29, 2004

TO THE MISSISSIPPI STATE SENATE:

Governor's Veto Message for Senate Bill 2800

I am returning Senate Bill Number 2800, "AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 31-7-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE STATE DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS OR INSTITUTIONS WHEN ENTERING INTO CONTRACTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF PRINTING SERVICES TO PURCHASE SUCH SERVICES FROM A PRINTING COMPANY LOCATED AND DOING BUSINESS WITHIN THE UNITED STATES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES" without my approval and assign the following reasons for my veto.

Current law (Mississippi Code Ann. §31-7-15) provides that when two or more competitive bids for state agency contracts for commodities are equal and one of the companies is based in Mississippi, that Mississippi company is given preference over other bidders. That's good for Mississippi jobs, good for Mississippi's economy, and I support this current law. In addition, I would support legislation that gives Mississippi companies credit for their overall economic impact in the state, including taxes paid to the State of Mississippi, when competing with a company that has no Mississippi presence during the state's contract evaluation process. But Senate Bill 2800 goes too far.

We have an obligation to the taxpayers to find the lowest cost for goods and services. Senate Bill 2800 would prevent the state from obtaining the lowest and best price for printing services. That is the wrong precedent to set. In addition, this bill specifically exempts the Legislature from its own requirements, and that's wrong. Senate Bill 2800, if enacted, also would violate U.S. laws relative to international trade. It is for these reasons that I have applied my veto to Senate Bill 2800. I urge the members to sustain the veto and reject Senate Bill 2800.

Respectfully submitted,

HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR