

By: Representative Warren

To: Public Health and Human Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 293

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-17-37, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO EXTEND THE REPEALER ON THE MISSISSIPPI OUT-OF-WEDLOCK
3 PREGNANCIES INCENTIVE GRANT FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** Section 43-17-37, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
6 reenacted and amended as follows:

7 43-17-37. (1) There is hereby created in the State Treasury
8 a special fund to be known as the Mississippi Reducing
9 Out-Of-Wedlock Pregnancies Incentive Grant Fund into which shall
10 be deposited the federal funds available for bonuses for the
11 reduction in out-of-wedlock births awarded under the federal
12 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of
13 1996 (Public Law 104-193) and such other money as the Legislature
14 may provide by appropriation. The money in the fund shall be used
15 for the purpose of providing financial incentives to counties to
16 reduce their out-of-wedlock birth rates as required by federal
17 welfare reform legislation. The fund shall be administered by the
18 Department of Human Services. Unexpended amounts remaining in the
19 fund at the end of the fiscal year shall not lapse into the State
20 General Fund, and any interest earned on amounts in the fund shall
21 be deposited to the credit of the fund; provided that any
22 unexpended amounts remaining in the fund on December 31, 2003,
23 shall lapse into the State General Fund.

24 (2) The Department of Human Services shall make annual
25 awards from the fund to the top five (5) counties with the
26 greatest reduction in out-of-wedlock births without an increase in
27 abortions in each of the following categories:

28 (a) One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) in
29 counties which had two hundred fifty (250) or fewer total live
30 births;

31 (b) Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) in
32 counties which had between two hundred fifty (250) and five
33 hundred (500) total live births;

34 (c) Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) in
35 counties which had five hundred (500) or more total live births.

36 (3) Determination of the recipient counties will be based on
37 an average of the previous two (2) years' out-of-wedlock birth
38 rates compared to the previous two-year average, and the number of
39 abortions performed on county residents compared to the number for
40 calendar year 1998 as reported by the State Department of Health.
41 In order to qualify for the award funds, the reduction in the
42 out-of-wedlock birth rate shall be at least three percent (3%).

43 (4) In order to be considered for an incentive award, the
44 county board of supervisors shall appoint an advisory committee
45 which shall develop a plan for the county to be submitted by the
46 county board of supervisors to the Department of Human Services by
47 December 1, 2000, and by December 1 of each subsequent year.

48 (5) Each county receiving an incentive award will be subject
49 to the following requirements:

50 (a) The county must use the incentive award for some
51 type of youth enrichment, such as, but not limited to, continuing
52 the implementation of the plan that reduced out-of-wedlock
53 pregnancies, education-related projects, recreational facilities,
54 or a summer work program; and

55 (b) The county must submit a report to the Department
56 of Human Services on the methods used to achieve the reduction in
57 out-of-wedlock births, and submit a separate report to the
58 department explaining how the incentive award was spent.

59 (6) If the fund is not adequate to make the distributions
60 presented under this section, the department may award funds to
61 counties on a reduced pro rata basis.

62 (7) Funds shall be distributed each year following the
63 release of the vital statistics report of the Mississippi State
64 Department of Health. The first disbursement from the fund shall
65 be made after such report is released which shows the statistics
66 for calendar year 2000.

67 (8) This section shall stand repealed from and after
68 December 31, 2007.

69 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
70 and after July 1, 2005.