

By: Representative Brown

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 216

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-1-4, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
 2 ESTABLISH THE MISSISSIPPI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INCENTIVE  
 3 PROGRAM BY REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
 4 AND THE OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN  
 5 SERVICES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A VOLUNTARY QUALITY RATING  
 6 SYSTEM (QRS) FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ALL  
 7 LICENSED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND  
 8 FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME SETTINGS; TO REQUIRE THE OFFICE OF FAMILY  
 9 AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES TO  
 10 DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER FUNDS TO CREATE CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND  
 11 REFERRAL (CCR&R) AGENCIES THROUGH A STATEWIDE NETWORK IN  
 12 PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND/OR  
 13 NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY ENTITIES; TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI  
 14 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A TEACHER WAGE  
 15 INCENTIVE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

17 **SECTION 1.** Section 43-1-4, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
 18 amended as follows:

19 43-1-4. The Department of Human Services shall have the  
 20 following powers and duties:

21 (a) To provide basic services and assistance statewide  
 22 to needy and disadvantaged individuals and families.

23 (b) To promote integration of the many services and  
 24 programs within its jurisdiction at the client level thus  
 25 improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and  
 26 providing easier access to clients.

27 (c) To develop a statewide comprehensive service  
 28 delivery plan in coordination with the Board of Health, the Board  
 29 of Mental Health, and the Department of Finance and  
 30 Administration. Such plan shall be developed and presented to the  
 31 Governor by January 1, 1990.

32 (d) To employ personnel and expend funds appropriated  
33 to the department to carry out the duties and responsibilities  
34 assigned to the department by law.

35 (e) To fingerprint and perform a criminal history  
36 record check on every employee or volunteer (i) who has direct  
37 access to clients of the department who are children or vulnerable  
38 adults, or (ii) who are in a position of fiduciary responsibility.  
39 Every such employee and volunteer shall provide a valid current  
40 social security number and/or driver's license number which shall  
41 be furnished to conduct the criminal history record check. If no  
42 disqualifying record is identified at the state level,  
43 fingerprints shall be forwarded to the Federal Bureau of  
44 Investigation for a national criminal history record check.

45 (f) To establish the Mississippi Early Childhood  
46 Education Incentive Program by requiring the Office of Family and  
47 Children's Services and the Office of Youth Services to develop  
48 and implement a voluntary Quality Rating System (QRS) for the  
49 purpose of improving the quality of all licensed early childhood  
50 education and after school programs and family child care home  
51 settings to be phased in over the next five (5) years beginning  
52 with October 1, 2006. The QRS criteria will be the basis for the  
53 QRS and shall address the following components: program  
54 standards, accountability, practitioner outreach, support and  
55 training, parent/consumer education around quality early childhood  
56 programs, program incentives to increase quality and credentials  
57 of teaching staff.

58 In addition, the Office of Family and Children's Services and  
59 the Office of Youth Services shall develop and administer funds to  
60 create Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies through a  
61 statewide network in partnership with community colleges,  
62 universities and/or non-profit community entities. The CCR&R  
63 agencies shall: provide training to teachings specific to the QRS  
64 criteria to enable early childhood program quality to improve as

65 measured by the QRS system; offer parent education information and  
66 training on what a quality early childhood program comprises and  
67 how to identify one, assist parents in locating child care  
68 programs that would meet the family's needs with regard to hours  
69 and days of operation, ages of children served, type of curriculum  
70 used by the program and other pertinent data related to program  
71 quality; and provide a site from which monitoring components of  
72 the QRS could operate. This program shall begin July 1, 2006.

73       **SECTION 2.** The Mississippi Department of Education shall  
74 develop and implement a teacher wage incentive program to allow  
75 participating early childhood programs in the Quality Rating  
76 System (QRS) to access funds to provide wage incentives to  
77 teachers that make nationally recognized educational advancements  
78 in the field per an incremental formula and criteria developed by  
79 the department. This program shall begin October 1, 2006.

80       **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
81 and after its passage.