

By: Representative Hudson

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1243

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE FOR AN EXTENDED DEER SEASON ON BUCKS WITH CERTAIN MINIMUM  
3 ANTLER SIZES IN CERTAIN COUNTIES IN SOUTH MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR  
4 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
7 amended as follows:

8 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

9 (a) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the Friday  
10 prior to Thanksgiving.

11 (b) With guns and with dogs: From the Saturday prior  
12 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

13 (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December  
14 2 through December 15.

15 (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through  
16 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide  
17 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate  
18 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer  
19 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated  
20 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

21 (e) The commission shall establish an extended season  
22 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from  
23 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of Interstate  
24 20 only for legal bucks. Any antlered deer taken in this area  
25 during any open season under this section must be a legal buck as  
26 defined in this paragraph. For purposes of this paragraph, the  
27 term "legal buck" means a deer with antlers of four (4) points or  
28 more with a minimum inside spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum

29 main beam length of thirteen (13) inches. The commission may  
30 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow  
31 season in paragraph (1)(a) in this area.

32 (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a  
33 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of  
34 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when  
35 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns  
36 and with dogs in paragraph (b).

37 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on  
38 wildlife management areas which it administers.

39 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of  
40 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation  
41 of the executive director based upon good and substantial  
42 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that  
43 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

44 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the  
45 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer  
46 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote  
47 of the commission.

48 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting  
49 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands  
50 under a deer management program prescribed or approved by the  
51 executive director.

52 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the  
53 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.  
54 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the  
55 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may  
56 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who  
57 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem  
58 wildlife.

59 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
60 and after July 1, 2006.