

By: Representative Hudson

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks

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 SOUTHWEST 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 U.S. Highway  
24 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 and the area south of  
25 Mississippi Highway 28 and west of U.S. Highway 49 only for legal  
26 bucks. Any antlered deer taken in this area during any open  
27 season under this section must be a legal buck as defined in this  
28 paragraph. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck"

29 means a deer with antlers of four (4) points or more with a  
30 minimum inside spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam  
31 length of thirteen (13) inches. The commission may delay the  
32 opening date and change the length of bow and arrow season in  
33 paragraph (1)(a) in this area.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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