

By: Senator(s) Jackson (32nd)

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2521

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A "REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PILOT PROGRAM
2 (R.A.S.P.)" WHICH SHALL BE AN INTERDICTION RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM FOR
3 CHILDREN GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 WHO ARE NOT APPROPRIATE FOR REFERRAL
4 TO LOCAL ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS; TO PROVIDE FOR THE
5 ADMINISTRATION OF SAID PROGRAM BY THE DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES
6 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created under the Division of Youth
9 Services of the Department of Human Services a program to be known
10 as the "Regional Alternative School Pilot Program (R.A.S.P.)."
11 The program shall be an interdiction/boot camp style program
12 designed for children in Grades 9 through 12 who are determined to
13 be inappropriate for the alternative school programs operated by
14 the local school districts. The program shall be located in a
15 properly licensed residential facility located in Noxubee County
16 or a county adjacent to Noxubee County.

17 (2) The Division of Youth Services of the Department of
18 Human Services shall implement and administer the Regional
19 Alternative School Pilot Program and shall promulgate rules and
20 regulations concerning the administration of the program. The
21 Division of Youth Services shall prepare written guidelines
22 concerning the nomination and selection process of participants in
23 the program, and such guidelines shall include a list of the
24 factors considered in the selection process.

25 (3) Participation in the Regional Alternative School Pilot
26 Program shall be on a voluntary basis. No child may be sentenced
27 by any court to participate in the program; however, a youth court
28 judge may refer the program to a child when, under his

29 determination, such program would be sufficient to meet the needs
30 of the child.

31 (4) The Division of Youth Services may award an adult high
32 school diploma to each participant who meets the minimum academic
33 requirements prescribed by the State Board of Education for
34 graduation from the Regional Alternative School Pilot Program.
35 Participants in the program who do not meet the minimum academic
36 requirements may be awarded a special certificate of attendance.
37 The State Board of Education shall establish rules and regulations
38 for awarding the adult high school diploma and shall prescribe the
39 form for such diploma and the certificate of attendance.

40 (5) The Department of Human Services may accept any
41 available funds that may be used to defray the expenses of the
42 program, including, but not limited to, federal funding, public or
43 private funds and any funds that may be appropriated by the
44 Legislature for that purpose.

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