

By: Representatives Jennings, Akins,
Hamilton (6th), Mayhall

To: Judiciary B

HOUSE BILL NO. 524

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 7-1-29, 47-5-147, 69-29-203,
2 83-1-35, 99-3-35 AND 99-3-39, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REMOVE
3 THE MAXIMUM LIMIT ON REWARDS FOR APPREHENDING CRIMINALS; AND FOR
4 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 7-1-29, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 7-1-29. Whenever the Governor shall be of opinion that the
9 public good requires it, he is authorized to offer, by
10 proclamation or in such other manner as he may deem advisable,
11 such reward as he may think the nature of the case requires * * *
12 for the apprehension and arrest of any person who has committed
13 any atrocious offense against the criminal laws, to be paid in no
14 instance until the offender is delivered to the civil authority of
15 the county where the offense was committed, and confined in jail
16 or admitted to bail; or the reward may be conditioned to be paid
17 only upon conviction.

18 **SECTION 2.** Section 47-5-147, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
19 amended as follows:

20 47-5-147. When an offender escapes from the custody of the
21 department, the commissioner shall immediately notify the Governor
22 who shall have exclusive power to authorize the payment of a
23 reward, in his discretion, * * * out of any money available in the
24 State Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the arrest and
25 delivery of such offender to the proper authorities.

26 **SECTION 3.** Section 69-29-203, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
27 amended as follows:

28 69-29-203. When the theft of any livestock or poultry shall
29 be reported to the sheriff of the county where the theft occurred,
30 it shall be the duty of the sheriff to make prompt and diligent
31 effort to arrest the thief or thieves. At the same time, it shall
32 be the duty of the president of the association to assist the
33 sheriff in the capture of the thief or thieves by posting or
34 publishing the standing reward offered by the association for
35 information leading to arrest and conviction of the said thief or
36 thieves, but in case of a theft of poultry no such reward shall be
37 offered by the association where the value of the poultry stolen
38 would amount to a misdemeanor only. When additional assistance
39 may be needed to bring those guilty of the theft of any livestock
40 or poultry to justice, the president of the association, or in his
41 absence or disability, three (3) or more directors of the
42 association may, in their discretion, notify the Governor and
43 request his assistance. When the Governor shall receive such
44 request it shall then be his duty to offer such reward as he may
45 deem proper for arrest and conviction of the said thief or
46 thieves, or for information leading to the arrest and
47 conviction * * *. In case it is impossible to break up livestock
48 and poultry thefts without employment of detectives, then the
49 Governor may, in his discretion, employ a reliable detective to
50 assist the sheriff and the association in any county. The reward
51 to be offered by the Governor and the expense of detectives shall
52 be paid out of the Governor's contingent fund.

53 **SECTION 4.** Section 83-1-35, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
54 amended as follows:

55 83-1-35. The Commissioner of Insurance is hereby authorized,
56 in his discretion, to offer a reward * * * for information leading
57 to the apprehension, indictment and conviction of any person,
58 persons or organization of persons responsible for the willful
59 destruction by fire or explosion of any real or personal property
60 located within this state.

61 The Commissioner of Insurance is further directed to have
62 suitable reward notices printed and posted in conspicuous places,
63 and to utilize such other news media or informational materials as
64 necessary to encourage those with information to come forward.

65 The reward monies paid, if any, as well as the cost of
66 printing and distribution of reward notices and other news media
67 or informational materials, shall be paid from premium taxes under
68 Sections 27-15-103 and 27-15-109. However, the Commissioner of
69 Insurance shall keep a separate account of all monies disbursed
70 under the provisions of this section and shall include the same in
71 his annual report.

72 **SECTION 5.** Section 99-3-35, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
73 amended as follows:

74 99-3-35. A person who shall arrest anyone who kills another
75 and is fleeing, or attempting to flee, before arrest, and shall
76 deliver him up for trial, shall be entitled to a reward out of the
77 treasury of the county in which the homicide occurred, upon the
78 allowance of the circuit court and the board of supervisors of the
79 county in the manner provided by law.

80 **SECTION 6.** Section 99-3-39, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
81 amended as follows:

82 99-3-39. (1) Boards of supervisors of the various counties
83 of this state and the governing authorities of the municipalities,
84 may either separately or in conjunction with each other, within
85 their discretion, offer monetary rewards, the amount of which
86 shall be fixed by the aforesaid governing authorities, within
87 their discretion, for information leading to the apprehension of
88 any person subsequently convicted of any crime or misdemeanor
89 committed within this state; information regarding the whereabouts
90 of missing persons; the ascertaining or divulging of any
91 information necessary or helpful for the governing or the
92 tranquility of any municipality or county of this state or for any
93 like purpose, * * * provided * * * that said reward shall not be

94 paid to any law enforcement officer or any employee of the
95 governing authority offering such reward or any member of the
96 immediate family of either.

97 (2) The aforesaid rewards may be paid from the general fund
98 of the respective counties or municipalities.

99 **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
100 and after July 1, 2007.