

By: Representative Brown

To: Universities and  
Colleges; Appropriations

## HOUSE BILL NO. 1160

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE  
2 TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIP FUND; TO AUTHORIZE STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM  
3 A PUBLIC COMMUNITY OR JUNIOR COLLEGE IN MISSISSIPPI TO A STATE  
4 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING TO APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP FROM THE  
5 FUND; TO PRESCRIBE REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL ELIGIBILITY AND  
6 CONTINUATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE BOARD OF  
7 TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS SHALL BE THE ADMINISTERING AGENCY  
8 OF THE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi Community  
11 and Junior College Transfer Scholarship Fund. The purpose of the  
12 fund is to assist eligible students in transferring from a public  
13 community or junior college in the state to a state institution of  
14 higher learning. The fund shall consist of all monies  
15 appropriated to the fund by the Legislature and any gifts, grants  
16 or donations that may be received from any source, public or  
17 private. Monies in the fund may be used solely for the purpose of  
18 awarding scholarships under this section. Interest earned on the  
19 investment of monies in the fund must be returned and deposited to  
20 the credit of the fund.

21 (2) A student transferring from a public community or junior  
22 college in the state to a state institution of higher learning may  
23 apply for a scholarship under this section. In order to be  
24 eligible, a student initially applying for a scholarship must meet  
25 the following requirements:

26 (a) Be a United States citizen or eligible citizen of  
27 another country and, if required, registered with the Selective  
28 Service;

29           (b) Have resided in Mississippi during the twelve (12)  
30 months preceding enrollment at any state institution of higher  
31 learning;

32           (c) Have a custodial parent or guardian who is a  
33 resident of Mississippi if the student is considered a dependent;

34           (d) Have no criminal record;

35           (e) Have never attended a state institution of higher  
36 learning;

37           (f) Have earned a minimum of sixty (60) transferable  
38 credit hours at a public community or junior college in  
39 Mississippi and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of  
40 3.0 calculated on a 4.0 scale;

41           (g) Be enrolling or accepted for enrollment at a state  
42 institution of higher learning as a full-time undergraduate  
43 student pursuing a first baccalaureate degree;

44           (h) File the Free Application for Federal Student  
45 Financial Aid (FAFSA);

46           (i) Be eligible for a Pell grant; and

47           (j) Be in compliance with the terms of federal and  
48 state aid programs.

49           (3) A student enrolled in a state institution of higher  
50 learning must meet the following requirements in order to maintain  
51 continued eligibility for a scholarship awarded under this  
52 section:

53           (a) Making steady academic progress toward a  
54 baccalaureate degree, including earning not less than the minimum  
55 number of credit hours required for full-time standing each  
56 semester or trimester at the applicable state institution of  
57 higher learning;

58           (b) Maintaining continuous enrollment at the same state  
59 institution of higher learning as a full-time undergraduate  
60 student, excluding summer sessions, for not less than two (2)  
61 semesters in each successive academic year, unless the student is

62 granted an approval for a transfer of award or, in the case of  
63 withdrawal from school, granted an exception for cause by the  
64 Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board;

65 (c) Have a cumulative grade point average of no less  
66 than 3.0 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of each academic  
67 year;

68 (d) Have no criminal record other than misdemeanor  
69 traffic violations;

70 (e) File the Free Application for Federal Student  
71 Financial Aid (FAFSA) annually;

72 (f) Be eligible for a Pell grant annually;

73 (g) Continue to maintain residency in Mississippi; and

74 (h) Be in compliance with the terms of federal and  
75 state aid programs.

76 (4) The failure of a student to maintain academic  
77 eligibility or status as a full-time student, other than in the  
78 case of complete withdrawal, results in the permanent  
79 discontinuation of the student's eligibility for a scholarship  
80 under this section. A complete withdrawal from a state  
81 institution of higher learning also results in the discontinuation  
82 of a student's eligibility for a scholarship; however, the student  
83 may file an appeal for reconsideration with the Postsecondary  
84 Education Financial Assistance Board and may be granted an  
85 exception for cause.

86 (5) Each student submitting an application for a scholarship  
87 under this section will be notified whether or not the student is  
88 determined to be eligible for funding. Any applicant from whom  
89 additional information is requested is encouraged to respond in  
90 writing by the specified deadline.

91 (6) The state institutions of higher learning and community  
92 and junior colleges shall report to the Board of Trustees of State  
93 Institution of Higher Learning certain information regarding each

94 applicant and recipient of a scholarship under this section,  
95 including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

96 (a) Confirmation that the scholarship recipient is  
97 enrolled full-time each semester; and

98 (b) Confirmation of the continuing eligibility of the  
99 recipient at the completion of each academic year ending after the  
100 spring semester or trimester, including:

101 (i) The total number of hours earned by the  
102 student during the specific academic year, excluding summer  
103 sessions;

104 (ii) The student's cumulative grade point average;  
105 and

106 (iii) Notification to the Postsecondary Education  
107 Financial Assistance Board if the student fails to enroll or  
108 subsequently withdraws from the state institution of higher  
109 learning.

110 (7) (a) The maximum annual scholarship that may be awarded  
111 to a student under this section is Three Thousand Dollars  
112 (\$3,000.00). Any student classified as a junior is eligible to  
113 receive a maximum of two (2) annual awards, or in those instances  
114 when a degree program requires five (5) years for completion,  
115 three (3) annual awards.

116 (b) A student's total financial award package may not  
117 exceed the cost of attendance or any other limitation established  
118 by the institution which is less than the cost of attendance at  
119 the state institution at which the student is enrolled. If a  
120 student's total financial award package exceeds the state  
121 institution's cost of attendance or any other lesser limitation  
122 established by the institution, the institution may reduce the  
123 amount of the scholarship awarded under this section. The state  
124 institution shall refund to the Postsecondary Education Financial  
125 Assistance Board an amount equal to that which a scholarship  
126 awarded to a student is reduced under this paragraph.

127           (8) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher  
128 Learning shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry  
129 out the purposes and intent of this section. The board of  
130 trustees is the administering agency of the program.

131           (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to fully fund  
132 scholarships to all eligible applicants under this program. If  
133 funds are insufficient to fully fund scholarships for all eligible  
134 applicants, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher  
135 Learning shall award scholarships to those students making steady  
136 academic progress toward their first baccalaureate degree on a  
137 first-come, first-served basis; however, priority consideration  
138 must be given to persons previously receiving scholarships under  
139 this section if those persons are making steady academic progress  
140 toward completion of a baccalaureate degree.

141           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
142 and after July 1, 2007.