

By: Representatives Dickson, Clark, Evans,
Flaggs, Huddleston, Myers, Smith (27th),
Thomas

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1222

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY
2 CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, WHICH SHALL BE A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP
3 THAT SERVES TO IDENTIFY METHODS OF INCREASING STUDENT PREPAREDNESS
4 FOR SCHOOL AT THE KINDERGARTEN LEVEL; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MAKEUP OF
5 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE BOARD TO
6 MATCH FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE STATE WITH PRIVATE FUNDS FOR THE
7 PURPOSE OF PROVIDING GRANTS FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS; TO REQUIRE THE
8 LEGISLATURE TO ANNUALLY APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE
9 MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT; TO REQUIRE
10 THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO MAKE GRANTS TO THE
11 MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FOR
12 PURPOSES OF IMPLEMENTING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT GRANT
13 PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO MAKE
14 GRANTS TO A PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION TO AID THE MISSISSIPPI
15 FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT; TO REQUIRE THE
16 MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT TO ADOPT A
17 SYSTEM OF EVALUATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

19 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi Foundation
20 for Early Childhood Development.

21 (2) The purpose of the Mississippi Foundation for Early
22 Childhood Development, a public-private partnership, is to
23 identify cost-effective ways to deliver quality early care and
24 education experiences and parent education for families whose
25 children are at risk of being unprepared for school. The
26 partnership shall develop infrastructure supports and
27 accountability measures to increase the quality of early care and
28 education settings and must build community capacity for school
29 readiness. The partnership will evaluate the resulting benefits
30 and long-term savings to the Mississippi economy and the
31 effectiveness of strategies for increasing children's readiness
32 for school upon entering kindergarten.

33 (3) The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood
34 Development shall seek tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3)

35 of the Internal Revenue Code. The foundation shall be governed by
36 a board comprised of public and private citizens, with no less
37 than fifty-one percent (51%) of the members representing the
38 private sector. The Governor shall appoint the members from the
39 public sector, which must include representatives of government,
40 academia and civil society.

41 (4) A review and planning advisory committee shall provide
42 counsel and advice to the executive director and board for
43 development of policies and procedures for the Mississippi
44 Foundation for Early Childhood Development. The committee also
45 must review cost-effective strategies for strengthening
46 Mississippi's early care and education capabilities. The
47 committee must include parents, representatives of the early care
48 and education field, K-12 education representatives and business
49 leaders. The membership of the committee must reflect the ethnic
50 and geographic diversity of the State of Mississippi.

51 (5) The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood
52 Development shall match dollars appropriated from the state with
53 nonpublic dollars raised by the board. The board shall award
54 grants for the following:

55 (a) Pilot projects that demonstrate successful
56 approaches to the delivery of early childhood services and parent
57 education to low-income families;

58 (b) Scholarships to low-income families to access early
59 childhood parent education and high-quality early learning
60 programs for their children; and

61 (c) The development of strategies to improve the
62 quality of early care and education through early learning
63 standards and assessment, a quality rating system, program
64 improvement grants and professional development grants.

65 **SECTION 2.** The Legislature shall appropriate annually to the
66 State Department of Education those state funds that may be
67 necessary to support the Mississippi Foundation for Early

68 Childhood Development in carrying out its functions under this
69 act.

70 **SECTION 3.** (1) Subject to the availability of funding
71 specifically appropriated for such purposes, the State
72 Superintendent of Public Education shall make a grant to the
73 Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood Development to
74 implement an early childhood development grant program for
75 low-income and other challenged families. The goals of the grant
76 program shall be to increase the effectiveness and expand the
77 capacity of public and nonpublic early childhood development
78 programs, which may include child care programs, and to lead to
79 improved early childhood parent education and children's
80 kindergarten readiness. The grant program may not supplant
81 existing early childhood development programs or child care funds.
82 The grant program must include the following components:

83 (a) Grant awards to existing early childhood
84 development program providers that provide parent education
85 programs and to qualified providers proposing to implement pilot
86 programs for this same purpose;

87 (b) Grant awards to enable low-income families to
88 participate in these programs;

89 (c) Grant awards to improve overall programmatic
90 quality; and

91 (d) An evaluation of the programmatic and financial
92 efficacy of all these programs, which may be performed using
93 measures of services, staffing and management systems which:
94 provide consistent information about system performance; show
95 trends; confirm successes; and identify potential problems in
96 early childhood development programs.

97 (2) In order to implement the requirements of subsection (1)
98 of this section, subject to the availability of funding
99 appropriated for such purposes, the State Superintendent of Public
100 Education shall make a grant to a private nonprofit, 501(c)(3)

101 organization. The private nonprofit organization must be governed
102 by a board of directors composed of members from the public and
103 nonpublic sectors. The nonpublic sector members must compose a
104 simple majority of the board members. The public sector members
105 shall be state and local government officials, kindergarten
106 through Grade 12 or postsecondary educators, and early childhood
107 providers appointed by the Governor. Membership on the board of
108 directors by a state agency official constitutes work duties for
109 the official and does not create a conflict of interest under
110 Section 25-4-105. The board of directors shall appoint an
111 executive director and shall seek advice from geographically and
112 ethnically diverse parents of young children and representatives
113 of early childhood development providers, kindergarten through
114 Grade 12 and postsecondary educators, public libraries and the
115 business sector. The board of directors is subject to the Open
116 Meetings Law (Chapter 41, Title 25, Mississippi Code of 1972).
117 All other terms and conditions under which board members serve and
118 operate must be described in the articles and bylaws of the
119 organization.

120 (3) In addition to the duties prescribed under subsection
121 (1) of this section, the Mississippi Foundation for Early
122 Childhood Development shall adopt a quality improvement and rating
123 system for the purpose of evaluating a program's effectiveness.
124 The quality improvement and rating system must serve in performing
125 the following functions:

126 (a) Providing consumer information to parents on child
127 care and early education program quality and ratings;

128 (b) Setting indicators to identify quality in care and
129 early education settings, including licensed family child care
130 centers, tribal providers and programs, Head Start and school-age
131 programs, and identifying quality programs through ratings and
132 ongoing monitoring of programs;

133 (c) Providing funds for provider improvement grants and
134 quality achievement grants;

135 (d) Requiring participating providers to incorporate
136 the state's early learning standards in their curriculum
137 activities and developing appropriate child assessments aligned
138 with the kindergarten readiness assessment;

139 (e) Providing accountability for the quality
140 improvement and rating system's effectiveness in improving child
141 outcomes and kindergarten readiness; and

142 (f) Aligning current and new state investments to
143 improve the quality of child care with the quality improvement and
144 rating system framework, by providing accountability and informed
145 parent choice. The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood
146 Development shall report back to the Legislature before January
147 15, 2009, on the progress being made under this paragraph.

148 (4) This section shall be repealed on July 1, 2012.

149 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
150 and after July 1, 2007.