

By: Representative Blackmon

To: Judiciary A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1361

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 25-32-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO REVISE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER TASK FORCE; TO  
3 EXTEND THE REPEALER ON THE TASK FORCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** Section 25-32-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
6 amended as follows:

7 25-32-71. (1) There is created the Mississippi Public  
8 Defender Task Force which shall be composed of eleven (11) members  
9 as follows:

10 (a) The President of the Mississippi Public Defender  
11 Association, or his designee;

12 (b) The President of the Mississippi Prosecutors  
13 Association, or his designee;

14 (c) A representative of the Administrative Office of  
15 Courts;

16 (d) A representative of the Mississippi Supreme Court;

17 (e) A representative of the Conference of Circuit  
18 Judges;

19 (f) A representative of the Mississippi Attorney  
20 General's Office;

21 (g) A representative of the Mississippi Association of  
22 Supervisors;

23 (h) A representative of The Mississippi Bar;

24 (i) A representative of The Magnolia Bar;

25 (j) The Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, or  
26 his designee;

27           (k) The Chairman of the Senate Appropriations  
28 Committee, or his designee;

29           (l) The Chairman of the House Judiciary En Banc  
30 Committee, or his designee;

31           (m) The Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee,  
32 or his designee.

33           (2) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a  
34 chairman and vice chairman from its membership and shall adopt  
35 rules for transacting its business and keeping records. Members  
36 of the task force shall receive a per diem in the amount provided  
37 in Section 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the  
38 task force. Members of the task force other than the legislative  
39 members shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred  
40 while engaged in official business of the task force in accordance  
41 with Section 25-3-41 and the legislative members of the task force  
42 shall receive the expense allowance provided for in Section  
43 5-1-47.

44           (3) The duties of the task force shall be to:

45           (a) Make a comprehensive study of the needs by circuit  
46 court districts for state-supported indigent defense counsel,  
47 examining existing public defender programs. Reports shall be  
48 provided to the Legislature each year at least one (1) month  
49 before the convening of the regular session.

50           (b) Examine and study approaches taken by other states  
51 in the implementation and costs of state-supported indigent  
52 criminal cases.

53           (c) To study the relationship between presiding circuit  
54 court judges and the appointment of criminal indigent defense  
55 counsel.

56           (4) This section shall stand repealed on July 1, 2011.

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