MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2007

By: Senator(s) Gordon, Frazier, Albritton, Brown, Burton, Butler, Carmichael, Chaney, Chassaniol, Davis, Dearing, Fillingane, Gollott, Harden, Horhn, Hyde-Smith, Jackson (11th), Jackson (15th), Jackson (32nd), Jordan, King, Lee (47th), Lee (35th), Little, Moffatt, Morgan, Nunnelee, Pickering, Posey, Ross, Simmons, Thames, Walley, White, Wilemon, Williamson, Clarke

SENATE BILL NO. 2364
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR MID-LEVEL FUNDING FOR MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES; TO PROVIDE A FORMULA FOR THE CALCULATION OF MID-LEVEL FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES; TO REQUIRE THE LEGISLATURE TO APPROPRIATE THE AMOUNT CALCULATED UNDER THE FORMULA TO THE COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) Mississippi's public community and junior colleges are Mississippi's best educational buy. An education at Mississippi's community and junior colleges is affordable and accessible to all. Mississippians have an option to attend a community or junior college close to home, with smaller class sizes and at approximately one-half (1/2) the cost of tuition at a public four-year institution;

(b) In recent fiscal years, appropriations for community and junior colleges have not kept pace with increases appropriated to Grades K-12 and the institutions of higher learning;

(c) A need exists to provide adequate funding for Mississippi's community and junior colleges; and

(d) Adequate funding should be accomplished through appropriate funding on a full-time equivalency (FTE) basis.

SECTION 2. As used in this act, the following terms shall be defined as provided in this section:

(a) "Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment" means the process by which the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) calculates FTE by taking total undergraduate semester credit hours divided by thirty (30); total undergraduate quarter hours divided
by forty-five (45); total graduate semester credit hours divided by twenty-four (24); and total graduate quarter hours divided by thirty-six (36).

(b) "State funds" means all funds appropriated by the Legislature including funds from the State General Fund, Education Enhancement Fund, Budget Contingency Fund and Health Care Expendable Fund.

(c) "E & G operations" means education and general expenses of the colleges and universities.

(d) "Average daily attendance (ADA)" means the figure that results when the total aggregate attendance during the period or months counted is divided by the number of days during the period or months counted upon which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction, less the average daily attendance for self-contained special education classes and, before full implementation of the Mississippi Adequate Education Program, the State Department of Education shall deduct the average attendance of the alternative school program provided for in Section 37-19-22.

SECTION 3. (1) In funding community and junior colleges, the actual amount of the annual appropriation of the community and junior colleges general support bill shall be computed as follows:

(a) Calculate the state funding per student for Grades K-12 by dividing the total revenue from state funds by the ADA. Both the funding and ADA figures shall be provided by the State Department of Education.

(b) Calculate the state funding per FTE for regional universities by dividing the state funds for E & G operations by FTE enrollment. Both funding and enrollment figures shall come from the SREB State Data Exchange.

(c) Mid-level funding for community and junior colleges shall be the average as computed from paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection multiplied by the total community and junior
college FTEs. This amount shall be appropriated annually by the Legislature to the community and junior colleges.

(2) Data used in the calculation of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of subsection (1) shall be the most current available data utilizing the same fiscal year for all entities involved. Information from the SREB State Data Exchange shall be used to ensure common denominators in the calculation of FTE enrollment and to ensure consistent reporting of financial data.

SECTION 4. This act shall be codified in Chapter 29, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2007.