

By: Senator(s) Jordan, Jackson (11th),
Thomas, Clarke, Walls, Simmons, Harden,
Williamson, Dawkins

To: Public Health and
Welfare; Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2742

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
2 ESTABLISH MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS
3 IMPLEMENTED IN LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES; TO PROVIDE THAT
4 LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION
5 FAILING TO MEET THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM
6 OPERATING; TO REQUIRE FACILITIES IN THE DELTA REGION WHICH ARE
7 REQUIRED TO BE LICENSED BY THE STATE BOARD OF HEALTH BUT HAVE
8 FAILED TO PROCURE A LICENSE TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW BEFORE JANUARY
9 1, 2010; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature finds that many children of
12 the Mississippi Delta region experience low quality, out-of-home
13 care and inferior child care programs. The Legislature further
14 finds that high quality child care is essential for children in
15 the Delta and is an investment in their future.

16 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that this act
17 establish a means to begin to effectuate a change in the culture
18 of licensed child care in the Delta region and to assist parents
19 in choosing quality care for their children.

20 **SECTION 2.** For purposes of this act, the terms "Mississippi
21 Delta region," "Delta region" and "region" are defined as the
22 western section of the State of Mississippi that lies between the
23 Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers, encompassing in part or whole the
24 Counties of Bolivar, Carroll, Claiborne, Coahoma, Holmes,
25 Humphreys, Issaquena, Jefferson, Leflore, Panola, Quitman,
26 Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington and
27 Yazoo.

28 **SECTION 3.** (1) The State Department of Education to
29 prescribe minimal guidelines for quality childhood education
30 programs implemented in licensed child care facilities.

31 (2) Before January 1, 2010, each child care facility
32 licensed by the State Board of Health in the Delta region must
33 meet the minimal requirements for quality child care education
34 established by the State Department of Education pursuant to
35 subsection (1) of this section. The guidelines must describe:
36 the minimum qualifications required of teaching staff; desirable
37 teacher-child ratios in the educational setting; acceptable
38 curricula and educational materials and equipment; and such other
39 matters determined by the department to be indicators of quality
40 education in the child care setting.

41 (3) The State Department of Education shall develop a
42 process to assess the quality of education programs in licensed
43 child care facilities. Any child care facility determined to not
44 be in compliance with the minimum requirements for quality
45 education will be prohibited from operating until the facility has
46 taken steps to correct the noncompliance and the State Department
47 of Education has approved of the corrective measures taken.

48 (4) Any child care facility in the Delta region which is
49 required to be licensed under Chapter 20, Title 43, Mississippi
50 Code of 1972, must be licensed and in compliance with the minimum
51 guidelines for quality education programs established pursuant to
52 subsection (1) of this section before January 1, 2010.

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