

By: Representatives Dickson, Hines, Scott,  
Clark

To: Select Committee on  
Poverty

HOUSE BILL NO. 665  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A JOINT LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE TO  
2 ADDRESS CHILDREN AND FAMILY ISSUES, BY THE CREATION OF A YOUTH  
3 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, AND BY THE CREATION OF SMALL GROUP HOMES AND  
4 COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE YOUTH  
5 ADVISORY COUNCIL; TO REQUIRE A REPORT TO BE GIVEN DURING THE 2010  
6 REGULAR SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE; TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON ALL  
7 FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S ISSUES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created a joint legislative study  
10 committee to establish measurable goals and benchmarks for the  
11 State of Mississippi relating to children and family issues. The  
12 committee shall make recommendations on all aspects of family  
13 services with an emphasis on government assistance, child care,  
14 promoting educational enhancement, unemployment, youth involvement  
15 and crime deterrence, crisis intervention and reducing disparities  
16 in education, income and availability of health care. The  
17 committee shall, at a minimum, study and report to the 2010  
18 Regular Session of the Legislature on whether the state should  
19 implement the following proposals:

20 (a) Develop initiatives to combat juvenile disciplinary  
21 problems;

22 (b) Gather information about current funding and  
23 services for children's services, by creating a children's budget  
24 and a report card to provide a comprehensive glance of total  
25 funding by age and level and type of services provided;

26 (c) Coordinate funds and programs to minimize  
27 duplication and maximize the return on investments in children and  
28 youth programs;



29 (d) Develop "a positive youth development approach"  
30 that sets clear direction and provides a vision for policymakers;

31 (e) Create small group homes and community-based  
32 programs aimed at shutting down and phasing out large juvenile  
33 institutions;

34 (f) Create one (1) group home in each congressional  
35 district; and

36 (g) Create a statewide youth advisory council, to get  
37 youth involved in the government process and community  
38 involvement.

39 The joint committee shall make a report of its findings and  
40 recommendations to the Legislature during the first week of the  
41 2010 Regular Session, including any recommended legislation.

42 (2) The joint committee shall be composed of the following  
43 eleven (11) members:

44 (a) The Chairman of the House Public Health and Human  
45 Services Committee, or his designee, and the Chairman of the  
46 Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, or his designee;

47 (b) Two (2) senators to be appointed by the Lieutenant  
48 Governor;

49 (c) Two (2) representatives to be appointed by the  
50 Speaker of the House; and

51 (d) Five (5) members to be appointed by the Governor of  
52 the State of Mississippi, who shall consist of state health agency  
53 heads, executive directors and other health-related officials.

54 (3) Appointments shall be made within thirty (30) days after  
55 the effective date of this act. The joint committee shall hold  
56 its first meeting before August 1, 2009. The Chairman of the  
57 House Public Health and Human Services Committee, or his designee,  
58 and the Chairman of the Senate Public Health and Welfare  
59 Committee, or his designee, shall serve as cochairmen of the  
60 committee.



61 (4) A majority of the members of the committee shall  
62 constitute a quorum. In the adoption of the rules, resolutions  
63 and reports, an affirmative vote of a majority of the members  
64 shall be required. All members shall be notified in writing of  
65 all meetings, such notices shall be mailed at least five (5) days  
66 prior to the date on which a meeting is to be held.

67 (5) Members of the committee shall receive the customary per  
68 diem compensation, expense reimbursement and mileage for attending  
69 committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session.

70 (6) The committee is authorized to accept funds from any  
71 source, public or private, to be expended in the implementing of  
72 its duties under this section.

73 (7) To effectuate the purposes of this section, any  
74 department, division, board, bureau, committee or agency of the  
75 state or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request  
76 of the cochairmen of the committee, provide such facilities,  
77 assistance and data as will enable the committee to properly carry  
78 out its duties.

79 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
80 and after July 1, 2009.

