

By: Representatives Brown, Scott, Clark

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 80
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND REPORT ON THE
2 FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS
3 IN MISSISSIPPI; TO PRESCRIBE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE AND
4 ITS DUTIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

5 WHEREAS, research shows that focused early childhood
6 education services and interventions enhance cognitive development
7 and improve learning outcomes; and

8 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi established and funds a
9 voluntary statewide kindergarten program for all five-year-olds
10 but has never funded pre-kindergarten educational programs; and

11 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature recognizes that the
12 development and funding of quality research-based pre-kindergarten
13 programs is needed urgently in our state; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

15 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Task Force to Study and Report on the
16 Funding and Implementation of Universal Pre-Kindergarten Programs
17 in Mississippi is created to study and report on its findings and
18 recommendations on those matters enumerated in subsection (3) of
19 this section. The task force shall be composed of the following
20 twenty-five (25) members:

21 (a) The Chairmen of the House and Senate Education
22 Committees;

23 (b) The Chairmen of the House and Senate Appropriations
24 Committees;

25 (c) The Chairmen of the House Public Health and Human
26 Services Committee and the Senate Public Health and Welfare
27 Committee;



28 (d) The State Superintendent of Public Education, or
29 his designee;

30 (e) The Executive Director of Human Services, or his
31 designee;

32 (f) The Director of the Early Childhood Institute,
33 Mississippi State University;

34 (g) Eight (8) persons who represent the state's schools
35 of education, with one (1) person being appointed by the
36 Commissioner of Higher Education from the school of education at
37 each state institution of higher learning;

38 (h) Two (2) persons who represent a Head Start program
39 in the state, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

40 (i) One (1) person who represents a pre-kindergarten
41 private provider in the state, to be appointed by the Lieutenant
42 Governor;

43 (j) The superintendent of a local school district, to
44 be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

45 (k) One (1) person who is recognized as an expert in
46 early childhood education, to be appointed by the Lieutenant
47 Governor;

48 (l) One (1) person who is a business leader in the
49 state, to be appointed by the Governor;

50 (m) One (1) person who represents a Title I
51 pre-kindergarten program in a local district, to be appointed by
52 the State Superintendent of Education;

53 (n) One (1) person who represents a non-Title I
54 pre-kindergarten program in a local school district, to be
55 appointed by the State Superintendent of Education; and

56 (o) The Executive Director of Mississippi Building
57 Blocks, or his designee.

58 (2) All members of the task force must be appointed within
59 thirty (30) days after the effective date of this act. The task
60 force shall hold its first meeting no later than July 15, 2010, on



61 the call of the Governor at a place designated by him. At that
62 first meeting, the task force shall elect from among its
63 membership a chairman and other officers, if any, determined to be
64 necessary. A majority of the membership of the task force shall
65 constitute a quorum, and an affirmative vote of a majority of the
66 task force shall be required for all actions taken. All members
67 must be notified in writing of all meetings at least five (5) days
68 before the date on which a meeting of the task force is scheduled.

69 (3) (a) The task force shall perform, at a minimum, the
70 following duties:

71 (i) Conduct a study of the effectiveness of
72 pre-kindergarten programs that exist in other states;

73 (ii) Review the structure and administration of
74 pre-kindergarten programs in other states;

75 (iii) Conduct a study of pre-kindergarten program
76 funding mechanisms used in other states;

77 (iv) Conduct a study of the possibility of
78 collaboration of pre-kindergarten providers, including public
79 schools, Head Start and private providers;

80 (v) Identify and conduct a study of effective
81 pre-kindergarten program curricula and services;

82 (vi) Determine pre-kindergarten program
83 requirements relating to facilities, nutrition services and
84 transportation;

85 (vii) Prepare a compilation and review of the
86 pre-kindergarten services currently provided in Mississippi;

87 (viii) Study any other issues relating to
88 pre-kindergarten programs determined to be relevant by the task
89 force;

90 (ix) Tour at least one (1) nationally recognized
91 successful pre-kindergarten program offered in another state; and



92 (x) Make appropriate findings and recommendations
93 addressing the matters enumerated in this paragraph, including any
94 legislative action that is considered necessary by the task force.

95 (b) Before January 2, 2011, the task force shall submit
96 a written report presenting its findings and recommendations
97 regarding the implementation and funding of a universal
98 pre-kindergarten program in Mississippi to the Governor and to all
99 members of the Legislature for consideration during the 2011
100 Regular Session.

101 (4) Members of the task force, other than the legislative
102 members, shall receive reimbursement for travel expenses incurred
103 while engaged in official business of the task force in accordance
104 with Section 25-3-41. Legislative members of the task force shall
105 receive the compensation authorized for committee meetings when
106 the Legislature is not in session. Payment of these expenses must
107 be from funds made available specifically for such purpose by the
108 Legislature or from any other public or private source.

109 (5) The State Department of Education and the Mississippi
110 Department of Human Services, acting jointly, shall provide
111 appropriate staff support to assist the task force in carrying out
112 its duties. Each department shall designate an appropriate
113 employee to act as a point of contact for the provision of staff
114 support to the task force.

115 (6) Upon presentation of its report, the task force shall be
116 dissolved.

117 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
118 and after its passage.

