

By: Representatives Dickson, Gardner,  
Clarke, Myers

To: Select Committee on  
Poverty

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 355

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY  
2 CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP THAT SHALL  
3 IDENTIFY METHODS TO INCREASE STUDENT PREPAREDNESS FOR SCHOOL AT  
4 THE KINDERGARTEN LEVEL; TO PROVIDE FOR THE MAKEUP OF THE BOARD OF  
5 TRUSTEES FOR THE FOUNDATION; TO REQUIRE THE BOARD TO MATCH FUNDS  
6 APPROPRIATED BY THE STATE WITH PRIVATE FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
7 PROVIDING GRANTS FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS; TO REQUIRE THE LEGISLATURE  
8 TO ANNUALLY APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE MISSISSIPPI  
9 FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT; TO REQUIRE THE  
10 SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO MAKE GRANTS TO THE  
11 MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FOR  
12 PURPOSES OF IMPLEMENTING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT GRANT  
13 PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO MAKE  
14 GRANTS TO A PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION TO AID THE MISSISSIPPI  
15 FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT; TO REQUIRE THE  
16 MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT TO ADOPT A  
17 SYSTEM OF EVALUATION AND TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THE  
18 RESULTS OF SUCH EVALUATION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

20 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi Foundation  
21 for Early Childhood Development.

22 (2) The purpose of the Mississippi Foundation for Early  
23 Childhood Development, a public-private partnership, is to  
24 identify cost-effective ways to deliver quality early care and  
25 education experiences and parent education for families whose  
26 children are at risk of being unprepared for school. The  
27 foundation shall develop infrastructure supports and  
28 accountability measures to increase the quality of early care and  
29 education settings and must build community capacity for school  
30 readiness. The foundation will evaluate the resulting benefits  
31 and long-term savings to the Mississippi economy and the  
32 effectiveness of strategies for increasing children's readiness  
33 for school upon entering kindergarten.



34           (3) The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood  
35 Development shall seek tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3)  
36 of the Internal Revenue Code. The foundation shall be governed by  
37 a board comprised of public and private citizens, with no less  
38 than fifty-one percent (51%) of the members representing the  
39 private sector. The Governor shall appoint the members from the  
40 public sector, which must include representatives of government,  
41 academia and civil society.

42           (4) A review and planning advisory committee shall provide  
43 counsel and advice to the executive director and board for  
44 development of policies and procedures for the Mississippi  
45 Foundation for Early Childhood Development. The advisory  
46 committee also must review cost-effective strategies for  
47 strengthening Mississippi's early care and education capabilities.  
48 The advisory committee must include parents, representatives of  
49 the early care and education field, K-12 education representatives  
50 and business leaders. The membership of the advisory committee  
51 must reflect the ethnic and geographic diversity of the State of  
52 Mississippi.

53           (5) The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood  
54 Development shall match dollars appropriated from the state with  
55 nonpublic dollars raised by the board. The board shall award  
56 grants for the following:

57                   (a) Pilot projects that demonstrate successful  
58 approaches to the delivery of early childhood services and parent  
59 education to low-income families;

60                   (b) Scholarships to low-income families to access early  
61 childhood parent education and high-quality early learning  
62 programs for their children; and

63                   (c) The development of strategies to improve the  
64 quality of early care and education through early learning  
65 standards and assessment, a quality rating system, program  
66 improvement grants and professional development grants.



67           **SECTION 2.** The Legislature shall appropriate annually to the  
68 State Department of Education those state funds that may be  
69 necessary to support the Mississippi Foundation for Early  
70 Childhood Development in carrying out its functions under this  
71 act.

72           **SECTION 3.** (1) Subject to the availability of funding, the  
73 State Superintendent of Public Education shall make a grant to the  
74 Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood Development to  
75 implement an early childhood development grant program for  
76 low-income and other challenged families. The goals of the grant  
77 program shall be to increase the effectiveness and expand the  
78 capacity of public and nonpublic early childhood development  
79 programs, which may include child care programs, and to lead to  
80 improved early childhood parent education and children's  
81 kindergarten readiness. The grant program may not supplant  
82 existing early childhood development programs or child care funds.  
83 The grant program must include the following components:

84                   (a) Grants to existing early childhood development  
85 program providers that provide parent education programs and to  
86 qualified providers proposing to implement pilot programs for this  
87 same purpose;

88                   (b) Grants to enable low-income families to participate  
89 in these programs;

90                   (c) Grants to improve overall programmatic quality; and

91                   (d) An evaluation of the programmatic and financial  
92 efficacy of all these programs, which may be performed using  
93 measures of services, staffing and management systems which:  
94 provide consistent information about system performance; show  
95 trends; confirm successes; and identify potential problems in  
96 early childhood development programs.

97           (2) In order to implement the requirements of subsection (1)  
98 of this section, subject to the availability of funding  
99 appropriated for such purposes, the State Superintendent of Public



100 Education shall make a grant to a private nonprofit, 501(c)(3)  
101 organization. The private nonprofit organization must be governed  
102 by a board of directors composed of members from the public and  
103 private sectors. The private sector members must compose a simple  
104 majority of the board membership. The public sector members must  
105 be state and local government officials, kindergarten through  
106 Grade 12 or postsecondary educators, and early childhood providers  
107 appointed by the Governor. Membership on the board of directors  
108 by a state agency official constitutes work duties for the  
109 official and does not create a conflict of interest under Section  
110 25-4-105. The board of directors shall appoint an executive  
111 director and shall seek advice from geographically and ethnically  
112 diverse parents of young children and representatives of early  
113 childhood development providers, kindergarten through Grade 12 and  
114 postsecondary educators, public libraries and the business sector.  
115 The board of directors is subject to the Open Meetings Law  
116 (Chapter 41, Title 25, Mississippi Code of 1972). All other terms  
117 and conditions under which board members serve and operate must be  
118 described in the articles and bylaws of the organization.

119 (3) In addition to the duties prescribed under subsection  
120 (1) of this section, the Mississippi Foundation for Early  
121 Childhood Development shall adopt a quality improvement and rating  
122 system for the purpose of evaluating a program's effectiveness.  
123 The quality improvement and rating system must serve in performing  
124 the following functions:

125 (a) Providing consumer information to parents on child  
126 care and early education program quality and ratings;

127 (b) Setting indicators to identify quality in care and  
128 early education settings, including licensed family child care  
129 centers, tribal providers and programs, Head Start and school-age  
130 programs, and identifying quality programs through ratings and  
131 ongoing monitoring of programs;



132 (c) Providing funds for provider improvement grants and  
133 quality achievement grants;

134 (d) Requiring participating providers to incorporate  
135 the state's early learning standards in their curriculum  
136 activities and developing appropriate child assessments aligned  
137 with the kindergarten readiness assessment;

138 (e) Providing accountability for the quality  
139 improvement and rating system's effectiveness in improving child  
140 outcomes and kindergarten readiness; and

141 (f) Aligning current and new state investments to  
142 improve the quality of child care with the quality improvement and  
143 rating system framework, by providing accountability and informed  
144 parent choice. The Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood  
145 Development shall report to the Legislature before January 15,  
146 2012, on the progress being made under this paragraph.

147 (4) In addition to other duties prescribed in this act, the  
148 Mississippi Foundation for Early Childhood Development shall make  
149 available to the public the results of the quality improvement and  
150 the rating system that is conducted, as required in subsection (3)  
151 of this section, for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness  
152 of a program. The board shall post the results of the rating  
153 system each time an assessment is completed, and the postings  
154 shall be made available to the public on the following state Web  
155 sites: the Mississippi Department of Education, the Board of  
156 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, the Mississippi  
157 Division of Medicaid, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health  
158 and the Mississippi Department of Human Services.

159 (5) This section shall be repealed on July 1, 2014.

160 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
161 and after July 1, 2010.

