

By: Representative Blackmon

To: Judiciary B

HOUSE BILL NO. 552  
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFENSE OF ONLINE IMPERSONATION; TO  
2 PROVIDE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

4 **SECTION 1.** (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law,  
5 any person who knowingly and without consent impersonates another  
6 actual person through or on an Internet website or by other  
7 electronic means for purposes of harming, intimidating,  
8 threatening or defrauding another person is guilty of a  
9 misdemeanor.

10 (2) For purposes of this section, an impersonation is  
11 credible if another person would reasonably believe, or did  
12 reasonably believe, that the defendant was or is the person who  
13 was impersonated.

14 (3) For purposes of this section, "electronic means" shall  
15 include opening an email account or an account or profile on a  
16 social networking Internet website in another person's name.

17 (4) A violation of this section is punishable by a fine of  
18 not less than Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) and not  
19 exceeding One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) or by imprisonment for  
20 not less than ten (10) days and not more than one (1) year, or  
21 both.

22 (5) This section shall not preclude prosecution under any  
23 other provision of law and shall be considered supplemental  
24 thereto.

25 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
26 and after July 1, 2011.

