

By: Senator(s) Collins

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2222

1 AN ACT TO BE REFERRED TO AS "ERIN'S LAW"; TO AUTHORIZE AND
2 DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT AND PROMULGATE AN
3 AGE-APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM FOR STUDENTS IN PRE-KINDERGARTEN
4 THROUGH FIFTH GRADE ADDRESSING SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND
5 TRAINING FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE; TO ESTABLISH
6 A TASK FORCE ON THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN UNDER
7 THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
8 SERVICES TO RECOMMEND LEGISLATION REGARDING COOPERATION AMONG
9 STATE AGENCIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE;
10 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

12 **SECTION 1.** (1) Effective with the 2012-2013 school year,
13 the State Board of Education is authorized and directed to adopt
14 and implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children that
15 shall include age-appropriate curriculum for students in
16 pre-Kindergarten through 5th Grade; training for school personnel
17 on child sexual abuse; educational information to parents or
18 guardians provided in the school handbook on the warning signs of
19 a child being abused, along with any needed assistance, referral,
20 or resource information; available counseling and resources for
21 students affected by sexual abuse; and emotional and educational
22 support for a child of abuse to continue to be successful in
23 school. The policy adopted may address without limitation:

24 (a) Methods for increasing teacher, student, and parent
25 awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children, including
26 knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a
27 victim of sexual abuse;

28 (b) Actions that a child who is a victim of sexual
29 abuse should take to obtain assistance and intervention; and



30 (c) Available counseling options for students affected
31 by sexual abuse.

32 (2) This section may be referred to as "Erin's Law."

33 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual
34 Abuse of Children is created within the State Department of Human
35 Services. The task force shall consist of all of the following
36 members:

37 (a) One (1) member of the Legislature and one (1)
38 member of the public, appointed by the Governor.

39 (b) One (1) member of the Legislature and one (1)
40 member of the public, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

41 (c) One (1) member of the Legislature and one (1)
42 member of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
43 Representatives.

44 (d) The Director of Children and Family Services in the
45 Department of Human Services, or his designee.

46 (e) The State Superintendent of Education, or his
47 designee.

48 (f) The State Health Officer, or his or her designee.

49 (g) A representative of an agency that leads the
50 collaboration of the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of
51 child sexual and physical abuse cases, appointed by the Director
52 of Children and Family Services.

53 (h) A representative of an organization representing
54 law enforcement, appointed by the Commissioner of Public Safety.

55 (i) A representative of a statewide professional
56 teachers' organization, appointed by the head of that
57 organization.

58 (j) A representative of an organization involved in the
59 prevention of child abuse in this state, appointed by the Director
60 of Children and Family Services.



61 (k) A representative of an organization representing
62 school management in this state, appointed by the State
63 Superintendent of Education.

64 Members of the task force must be individuals who are
65 actively involved in the fields of the prevention of child abuse
66 and neglect and child welfare. The appointment of members must
67 reflect the geographic diversity of the state.

68 (2) The task force shall elect a presiding officer by a
69 majority vote of the membership of the task force. The task force
70 shall meet at the call of the presiding officer.

71 (3) The task force shall make recommendations for reducing
72 child sexual abuse in Mississippi. In making those
73 recommendations, the task force shall:

74 (a) Gather information concerning child sexual abuse
75 throughout the state;

76 (b) Receive reports and testimony from individuals,
77 state and local agencies, community-based organizations, and other
78 public and private organizations;

79 (c) Create goals for state policy that would prevent
80 child sexual abuse; and

81 (d) Submit a final report with its recommendations to
82 the Office of the Governor and the Legislature by January 1, 2013.

83 (4) Members shall serve without compensation but may be
84 reimbursed for actual expenses from any available funds.
85 Legislative members may be reimbursed from the Contingent Expense
86 Fund of the respective house at the same rate as attending
87 committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session.

88 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
89 and after July 1, 2012.

