

By: Representatives Bounds, Morgan

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and
Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 1139
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 AUTHORIZE THE TAKING OF DEER DURING ANY OPEN SEASON ON DEER WITH
3 PRIMITIVE WEAPONS BY A PERSON WITH ANY LEGAL WEAPON OF CHOICE ON
4 PRIVATE LANDS IF THE PERSON IS THE LANDOWNER, LESSEE, MEMBER OF A
5 HUNTING CLUB OR A GUEST OF EITHER; TO PROVIDE THAT IF A LICENSE IS
6 REQUIRED FOR THE TAKING OF DEER UPON PRIVATE LANDS, THE HUNTER
7 SHALL PURCHASE AND HAVE IN HIS OR HER POSSESSION A VALID PRIMITIVE
8 WEAPON LICENSE, SPORTSMAN'S LICENSE OR LIFETIME SPORTSMAN'S
9 LICENSE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
12 amended as follows:

13 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

14 (a) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the Friday
15 prior to Thanksgiving.

16 (b) With guns and with dogs: from the Saturday prior
17 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

18 (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December
19 2 through December 15.

20 (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through
21 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide



22 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate
23 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer
24 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated
25 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

26 (e) The commission shall establish an extended season
27 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from
28 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway
29 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any
30 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this
31 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For
32 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer
33 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside
34 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of
35 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may regulate the taking of
36 deer with antlers of four (4) points or less under this paragraph
37 for the proper management of antlered deer. The commission may
38 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow
39 season in subsection (1) (a) in this area.

40 (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a
41 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of
42 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when
43 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns
44 and with dogs in paragraph (b).

45 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on
46 wildlife management areas which it administers.



47 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of
48 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation
49 of the executive director based upon good and substantial
50 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that
51 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

52 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the
53 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer
54 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote
55 of the commission.

56 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting
57 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands
58 under the deer management assistance program prescribed or
59 approved by the executive director.

60 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the
61 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.
62 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the
63 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may
64 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who
65 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem
66 wildlife.

67 (5) (a) During any open season on deer with primitive
68 weapons after November 30, a person may use any legal weapon of
69 choice on private lands only, if the person is:

70 (i) The title owner of the land;

71 (ii) The lessee of the hunting rights on the land;



72 (iii) A member of a hunting club leasing the
73 hunting rights on the land; or

74 (iv) A guest of a person specified in subparagraph
75 (i), (ii) or (iii).

76 (b) If the person is required to have a hunting
77 license, the person must have a primitive weapon license,
78 Sportsman's License or a Lifetime Sportsman's License.

79 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
80 and after July 1, 2014.

