

By: Senator(s) Tollison, Butler (36th),
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Sojourner

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2659
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING
2 SERVICES IN SCHOOLS (MCOPS) GRANT PROGRAM IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT
3 OF EDUCATION TO ASSIST LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN PROVIDING
4 ADDITIONAL SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS TO ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY
5 POLICING IN AND AROUND PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS; TO PRESCRIBE
6 REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR THE PROGRAM; TO AUTHORIZE THE LOCAL
7 SCHOOL BOARD OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS, WHICH ARE UNABLE TO MEET
8 THE FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MCOPS PROGRAM,
9 TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR THE SECURITY OF ITS STUDENTS, FACULTY AND
10 ADMINISTRATION, WHICH MUST BE APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF
11 EDUCATION AND THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, AND TO
12 PROVIDE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD MAY APPLY FOR GRANTS UNDER THE MCOPS
13 PROGRAM FOR TRAINING OF SECURITY PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY THE SCHOOL
14 DISTRICT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

16 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby established the Mississippi
17 Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools (MCOPS) grant
18 program in the State Department of Education to provide funding,
19 pursuant to specific appropriation by the Legislature therefor, to
20 assist law enforcement agencies in providing additional School
21 Resource Officers to engage in community policing in and around
22 primary and secondary schools. The MCOPS program shall authorize
23 the State Department of Education to make grants to increase
24 deployment of law enforcement officers in order (a) to increase or



25 enhance community policing in this state, (b) that trained, sworn
26 enforcement officers assigned to schools play an integral part in
27 the development and/or enhancement of a comprehensive school
28 safety plan, and (c) that the presence of these officers shall
29 provide schools with a direct link to local law enforcement
30 agencies.

31 (2) The MCOPS program shall meet the following requirements
32 and standards:

33 (a) This program shall provide an incentive for law
34 enforcement agencies to build collaborative partnerships with the
35 school community and to use community policing efforts to combat
36 school violence and implement educational programs to improve
37 student and school safety.

38 (b) The additional School Resource Officers must devote
39 at least seventy-five percent (75%) of their time to work in and
40 around primary and secondary schools, in addition to the time that
41 School Resource Officers are devoting in the absence of the MCOPS
42 in Schools grant.

43 (c) The MCOPS in Schools program shall provide a
44 maximum state contribution of up to Ten Thousand Dollars
45 (\$10,000.00) per officer position over the one-year grant period,
46 to be matched from local funds on a 50/50 matching basis.
47 Officers paid with MCOPS funds may be employed by the local law
48 enforcement agency or by the local school district. MCOPS funds
49 may be used to pay for entry-level salaries and benefits of newly



50 trained additional School Resource Officers and may be used to pay
51 the salaries and benefits of School Resource Officers employed
52 prior to July 1, 2013. All jurisdictions that apply must
53 demonstrate that they have primary law enforcement authority over
54 the school(s) identified in their application and demonstrate
55 their inability to implement this project without state
56 assistance. Schools or law enforcement agencies may not reduce
57 its overall federal, state, locally funded level of sworn officers
58 (including other School Resource Officers or other sworn officers
59 assigned to the schools) as a result of applying for or receiving
60 MCOPS in Schools grant funding. MCOPS in Schools funding may be
61 used to rehire sworn officers previously employed who have been
62 laid off for financial reasons unrelated to the availability of
63 the MCOPS in Schools grant, but must obtain prior written approval
64 from the State Department of Education.

65 (f) School Resource Officers (SROs) may serve in a
66 variety of roles, including, but not limited to, that of a law
67 enforcement officer/safety specialist, law-related educator, and
68 problem-solver/community liaison. These officers may teach
69 programs such as crime prevention, substance abuse prevention, and
70 gang resistance as well as monitor and assist troubled students
71 through mentoring programs. The School Resource Officer(s) may
72 also identify physical changes in the environment that may reduce
73 crime in and around the schools, as well as assist in developing
74 school policies which address criminal activity and school safety.



75 The application must also include a Memorandum of Understanding
76 (MOU), signed by the law enforcement executive and the appropriate
77 school official(s), to document the roles and responsibilities to
78 be undertaken by the law enforcement agency and the educational
79 school partner(s) through this collaborative effort. The
80 application must also include a Narrative Addendum to document
81 that the School Resource Officer(s) will be assigned to work in
82 and around primary or secondary schools and provide supporting
83 documentation in the following areas: problem identification and
84 justification, community policing strategies to be used by the
85 officers, quality and level of commitment to the effort, and the
86 link to community policing.

87 (g) All agencies receiving awards through the MCOPS in
88 Schools program are required to send the School Resource Officer
89 position(s) funded by this grant, to the Mississippi Law
90 Enforcement Officers' Training Academy where they shall be
91 required to participate in training through the Advanced Law
92 Enforcement Rapid Response Training Program at the academy, with
93 the cost to be defrayed from the MCOPS program. The MCOPS Office
94 of the State Department of Education will reimburse grantees for
95 training, per diem, travel, and lodging costs for attendance of
96 required participants up to a maximum of One Thousand Two Hundred
97 Dollars (\$1,200.00) per person attending. Applicants receiving an
98 MCOPS in Schools grant, will receive additional training
99 information following notification of the grant award. The MCOPS



100 in Schools training requirement must be completed prior to the end
101 of twelve-month grant funding for officer positions.

102 (3) The State Department of Education shall promulgate rules
103 and regulations prescribing procedures for the application,
104 expenditure requirements and the administration of the Mississippi
105 Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools (MCOPS) program
106 established in this section, and shall make a report on the
107 implementation of the MCOPS program with any recommendations to
108 the 2014 Regular Session of the Legislature.

109 **SECTION 2.** In the event that a public school district is
110 unable to participate in the MCOPS program due to the district's
111 inability to meet the necessary financial requirements of the
112 local fund match, the local school board of that school district
113 may develop a plan for the security of its students, faculty and
114 administration, which must be approved by the State Board of
115 Education and the Mississippi Department of Public Safety prior to
116 its implementation. The local school board may still apply for
117 grants under the MCOPS program for training of security personnel
118 employed by the school district.

119 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
120 and after July 1, 2013.

