

By: Senator(s) Burton

To: Public Health and Welfare

SENATE BILL NO. 2107
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 43-6-171, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO CLARIFY THE STATUTE REQUIRING LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING OFFICES AND
3 STATE AGENCIES TO USE CERTAIN "PERSON FIRST" REFERENCES TO
4 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 43-6-171, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 43-6-171. (1) The Legislature recognizes that language used
9 in reference to individuals with disabilities shapes and reflects
10 society's attitudes towards people with disabilities. Many of the
11 terms currently used diminish the humanity and natural condition
12 of having a disability. Certain terms are demeaning and create an
13 invisible barrier to inclusion as equal community members. The
14 Legislature finds it necessary to clarify preferred language for
15 new and revised laws and rules by requiring the use of terminology
16 that puts the person before the disability.

17 (2) The legislative drafting offices of the House and Senate
18 are directed to avoid all references to the terms "disabled,"
19 "developmentally disabled," "mentally disabled," "mentally ill,"



20 "mentally retarded," "handicapped," "cripple" and "crippled," in
21 any new statute, memorial or resolution, and to change those
22 references in any existing statute, memorial or resolution as
23 sections including those references are otherwise amended by law.
24 The drafting offices are directed to replace the terms referenced
25 above as appropriate with the following revised terminology:
26 " * * * persons with disabilities," " * * * persons with
27 developmental disabilities," " * * * persons with mental illness"
28 and " * * * persons with intellectual or cognitive disabilities."

29 (3) No statute, memorial or resolution is invalid because it
30 does not comply with this section.

31 (4) All state agency orders creating new rules, or amending
32 existing rules, shall be formulated in accordance with the
33 requirements of subsection (1) of this section regarding the use
34 of respectful language.

35 (5) No agency rule is invalid because it does not comply
36 with this section.

37 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
38 and after July 1, 2015.

