

By: Representative Hines

To: Municipalities; Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 156

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE "COMMUNITY AND POLICE SAFETY ACT"; TO
 2 AUTHORIZE THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF ANY MUNICIPALITY TO PROVIDE
 3 TAX-FORFEITED LANDS AND ANY BUILDING THEREON TO ANY POLICE OFFICER
 4 WHO IS EMPLOYED FULL TIME AS A POLICE OFFICER WITH THE
 5 MUNICIPALITY, AS PART OF THE OFFICER'S COMPENSATION PACKAGE; TO
 6 PROVIDE THE PROCEDURE FOR ALLOCATION OF LANDS, IF THE OFFICER IS
 7 TERMINATED; TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO ENTER
 8 AGREEMENTS WITH SUCH MUNICIPALITIES; TO AMEND SECTIONS 25-19-1,
 9 7-11-11, 21-33-75, 21-33-71 AND 21-33-73, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
 10 1972, TO CONFORM TO THE PRECEDING SECTIONS; AND FOR RELATED
 11 PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and referred to as the
 14 "Community and Police Safety Act."

15 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Legislature recognizes that
 16 municipalities need to create effective strategies for improving
 17 the safety of communities. The Legislature recognizes a direct
 18 correlation between strong police presence within a municipality
 19 and safety amongst its citizens. It is the intent of this
 20 legislation to aid municipal efforts to strengthen their law
 21 enforcement and create safer communities.



22 (2) The governing authority of any municipality may provide
23 tax-forfeited lands and any building thereon to any police officer
24 who is employed full time as a police officer with the
25 municipality, as part of the officer's compensation package.

26 (3) The authority granted by this section for tax-forfeited
27 lands and buildings thereon, shall only be applicable during the
28 time that an officer is a full-time employee with the
29 municipality. Upon termination of employment with the
30 municipality, whether initiated by the police officer or the
31 municipality, the land and any housing agreement authorized by
32 this section shall terminate within thirty (30) days after the
33 date that the employment of the officer was terminated. Upon
34 termination, the governing authority may, at its discretion, offer
35 the land and building thereon for sale to the officer for no less
36 and no more than the fair market price. The provisions of this
37 section shall in no way require the governing authority to sell
38 the land to any terminated officer.

39 (4) The Secretary of State shall promulgate rules and
40 regulations that allow the Secretary of State to donate
41 tax-forfeited lands and the building thereon to the governing
42 authority of a municipality that creates a housing program
43 authorized by this section and Section 25-19-1.

44 **SECTION 3.** Section 25-19-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
45 amended as follows:

46 25-19-1. (1) As used in this section:



47 (a) "Eligible employee" means an employee of a public
48 employer that is not subject to the provisions of Section 25-3-37
49 and meets the eligibility criteria set forth in the rules and
50 regulations of the public employer.

51 (b) "Public employer" means any agency, board,
52 commission, municipality, governing authority or other
53 instrumentality of state or local government including, but not
54 limited to, an institution of higher learning or a community or
55 junior college.

56 (2) Any public employer may establish an employer-assisted
57 housing program to provide funds, tax-forfeited lands and any
58 building thereon to eligible employees of the public employer to
59 be used for the housing assistance program authorized in Section 2
60 of this act. * * * Any funds distributed under this program * * *
61 shall be utilized by an eligible employee for rental security
62 deposits, rental subsidies, down payments, closing costs or any
63 other fees or costs associated with the rental or purchase of a
64 home. The housing assistance may be in the form of a grant,
65 forgivable loan or repayable loan. The public employer may
66 contract with one or more public or private entities and/or the
67 Office of the Secretary of State to provide assistance in
68 implementing and administering the program and shall adopt rules
69 and regulations for the administration of the program.

70 (3) If the assistance is structured as a forgivable loan,
71 the participating employee must remain as an employee of the



72 public employer for an agreed * * * period of time, as determined
73 by the rules and regulations adopted by the public employer in
74 order to have the loan forgiven. The forgiveness structure,
75 amount of assistance and repayment terms shall be determined by
76 the public employer.

77 **SECTION 4.** Section 7-11-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
78 amended as follows:

79 7-11-11. The Secretary of State shall have charge of the
80 swamp and the overflowed lands and indemnity lands in lieu
81 thereof, the internal improvement lands, the lands forfeited to
82 the state for nonpayment of taxes, except as otherwise provided by
83 Section 2 of this act, after the time allowed by law for
84 redemption shall have expired, and of all other public lands
85 belonging to or under the control of the state. The regulation,
86 sale and disposition of all such lands shall be made through the
87 Secretary of State's office.

88 The Secretary of State shall sign all conveyances and leases
89 of any and all state-owned lands and shall record same in a book
90 kept in his office for such purposes.

91 **SECTION 5.** Section 21-33-75, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
92 amended as follows:

93 21-33-75. After the time to redeem from the municipal tax
94 sale has expired, or after the municipality has purchased land as
95 provided by law, said municipality, acting through its governing
96 authorities, shall take possession of said lands and shall



97 endeavor to sell same as expeditiously as good business may
98 require or use the lands as part of its police officers'
99 compensation for employment as provided in Section 2 of this act.

100 However, it may lease said lands until a sale thereof can be made.

101 Said municipal governing authorities may lease or sell any of
102 said lands to any person in any manner that may be prescribed by
103 an order or resolution, which said order or resolution shall be
104 entered in the minutes covering each particular tract of land so
105 leased or sold, it being the intention of the Legislature to vest
106 in municipal authorities in each specific case of lease or sale
107 the right to fix the price, terms, and conditions of each sale or
108 lease.

109 **SECTION 6.** Section 21-33-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
110 amended as follows:

111 21-33-71. When the state, county, or taxing district taxes
112 are paid by a municipality, or where lands are redeemed or
113 purchased by a municipality, as provided in Section 21-33-69, such
114 lands shall not be exempt from state, county, or other taxing
115 district taxes but shall be liable for such taxes the same as if
116 owned by an individual, unless the lands are used as part of the
117 municipality's police officer compensation as authorized by
118 Section 2 of this act. It shall be the duty of the tax assessor
119 to assess lands purchased pursuant to the authority granted in
120 Section 29-1-51 * * * for taxes in the same manner as other lands
121 are assessed and if the taxes are not paid when due, it shall be



122 the duty of the tax collector to sell said land for the delinquent
123 taxes due and unpaid at the time and in the manner provided by law
124 for the sale of lands for delinquent taxes.

125 **SECTION 7.** Section 21-33-73, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
126 amended as follows:

127 21-33-73. Any municipality in the state having a tax lien
128 for special improvements or any other tax lien upon property
129 located therein is hereby authorized, when the said property is
130 offered for sale by the state and county for state and county
131 taxes due thereon, to purchase at such tax sale the property upon
132 which it holds said special improvement lien, and shall be
133 authorized to pay the amount of its bid therefor.

134 Except as otherwise provided by Section 2 of this act,
135 whenever property upon which any municipality in this state holds
136 a lien has already been sold for state and county taxes, the
137 municipality may redeem the tax sale the same as other lien
138 holders in the state, and authority for municipalities to so thus
139 redeem is hereby granted.

140 **SECTION 8.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
141 and after its passage.

