

By: Senator(s) Branning, Parker

To: Veterans and Military
Affairs; County Affairs

SENATE BILL NO. 2043

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 35-3-21, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REMOVE THE LANGUAGE PROHIBITING COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS
3 FROM HOLDING ANY OTHER ELECTIVE OR APPOINTIVE POSITION; AND FOR
4 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 35-3-21, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 35-3-21. In order to maintain offices and pay personnel for
9 the purpose of assisting all residents of the State of Mississippi
10 who served in the military or naval forces of the United States
11 during any war, their relatives, beneficiaries or dependents, to
12 receive from the United States any and all compensation,
13 hospitalization, insurance or other aid or benefits to which they
14 may be entitled under existing or hereafter enacted laws of the
15 United States, the boards of supervisors in the various counties
16 in the state are hereby authorized and empowered, in their
17 discretion, to expend out of the general county fund, or special
18 veterans' fund herein authorized to be set up, or from both of



19 such funds, such monies necessary to defray the office operating
20 expenses and salary of the county veteran service officers.

21 Two (2) or more counties may, upon resolution duly adopted by
22 the board of supervisors of each of such counties, agree to
23 establish one (1) veteran service office for all of such counties.
24 When two (2) or more counties enter into such an agreement, each
25 county shall pay such amount mutually agreed upon and duly adopted
26 by resolution of the respective boards of supervisors.

27 County veteran service officers shall be (a) honorably
28 discharged or honorably released veterans of any war or police
29 action in which the Armed Forces of the United States have been,
30 are or shall be committed for action; (b) the surviving spouse or
31 child of any such deceased veteran; or (c) any person employed as
32 a county veteran service officer in any county of this state on
33 March 30, 1990. From and after July 1, 1990, county veteran
34 service officers shall be certified by the Mississippi State
35 Veterans' Affairs Board which, among any other criteria it may
36 establish, shall require such officers to (a) attend at least one
37 (1) of the two (2) annual training programs provided for such
38 officers and (b) successfully complete a written examination each
39 year on the duties and responsibilities of and assistance
40 available to such officers and veterans. The programs shall be
41 developed by the State Veterans' Affairs Board. The program shall
42 include a period of instruction which shall be not more than three
43 (3) days for veteran service officers receiving initial



44 certification, and not more than two (2) days for veteran service
45 officers being recertified. County veteran service officers who
46 annually receive and complete such instruction in a manner
47 satisfactory to the Veterans' Affairs Board and in accordance with
48 this section shall be certified by the board. No county veteran
49 service officer shall be entitled to receive any compensation for
50 his services, to which he is otherwise entitled by law, unless he
51 is annually certified by the board.

52 County veteran service officers may be employed, in the
53 discretion of the boards of supervisors, either full time or part
54 time * * *.

55 The boards of supervisors of the various counties are further
56 authorized and empowered to pay all necessary and actual expenses
57 of county veteran service officers who attend a school of
58 instruction within the State of Mississippi for such county
59 veteran service officers.

60 It shall also be the duty of the boards of supervisors to aid
61 the United States to defeat all unjust claims for aid or benefit
62 therefrom.

63 Such expenditures may be made by the several counties acting
64 alone, or in cooperation with other counties, and in cooperation
65 with any federal or state agency carrying out such purposes.

66 In the event that the general revenues of the county levied
67 under and within the limits of existing taxing statutes are not
68 sufficient to pay the expenses authorized herein, the board of



69 supervisors may, in its discretion, levy an additional tax not to
70 exceed one (1) mill on all taxable property in the county to
71 defray such expenses or any part thereof. Any tax levy made under
72 authority of this chapter shall not be considered in refunding
73 homestead exemption losses under Title 27, Chapter 33, Mississippi
74 Code of 1972.

75 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
76 and after July 1, 2018.

