

By: Senator(s) Doty

To: Public Health and
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2671

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 37-144-1, 37-144-3, 37-144-5,
2 37-144-7 AND 37-144-17, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCLUDE
3 PSYCHIATRY STUDENTS IN THE MISSISSIPPI RURAL PHYSICIANS
4 SCHOLARSHIP RESIDENCY PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-144-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-144-1. There is established the Mississippi Rural
9 Physicians Scholarship Program for the purpose of identifying and
10 recruiting qualified university and college students from rural
11 areas of the state for medical or osteopathic school
12 matriculation. The program shall consist of three (3) distinct
13 phases through which participants will progress, including:

14 (a) Undergraduate premedical education;

15 (b) Medical or osteopathic school and residency
16 including residency in psychiatry; and

17 (c) Post-residency entry into medical practice in a
18 rural or underserved area of the State of Mississippi.



19 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-144-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
20 amended as follows:

21 37-144-3. (1) The Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship
22 Program shall be administered by a commission to be known as the
23 "Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Commission." The
24 commission shall be directed by a board composed of the following
25 members:

26 (a) Two (2) generalist physicians appointed by and from
27 the membership of the Mississippi State Medical Association, the
28 term of which shall be three (3) years and may be reappointed for
29 one (1) additional term;

30 (b) One (1) generalist physician appointed by and from
31 the membership of each of the following organizations, the term of
32 which shall be three (3) years and may be reappointed for one (1)
33 additional term:

34 (i) Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians;

35 (ii) Mississippi Chapter, American College of
36 Physicians;

37 (iii) Mississippi Chapter, American Academy of
38 Pediatrics;

39 (iv) Mississippi Chapter, American College of
40 OB-GYN;

41 (v) Mississippi Medical and Surgical Association;

42 (vi) Mississippi Osteopathic Association;



43 (c) Two (2) designees of the Dean of the University of
44 Mississippi School of Medicine whose terms are at the discretion
45 of the dean, at least one (1) of whom is a member of the
46 University of Mississippi School of Medicine Admissions Committee;

47 (d) Two (2) medical students, one (1) of whom shall be
48 selected yearly through a process developed by the Dean of the
49 School of Medicine in consultation with the Chairs of the
50 Departments of Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, OB-GYN and
51 Pediatrics, and one (1) of whom shall be nominated for a one-year
52 term by the Mississippi Chapter of the Student National Medical
53 Association and approved by the Dean of the University of
54 Mississippi School of Medicine;

55 (e) A member of the Board of Trustees of State
56 Institutions of Higher Learning; * * *

57 (f) The Chair of the Department of Family Medicine at
58 the University of Mississippi School of Medicine * * *; and

59 (g) A licensed psychiatrist appointed by the
60 Mississippi Chapter of the American College of Psychiatrists.

61 (2) The premedical advisors from the accredited four-year
62 colleges and universities in the state and the directors or
63 designees of the primary care generalist training programs in the
64 State of Mississippi shall comprise an advisory committee to the
65 commission to assist the commission in its administration of the
66 Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program.



67 (3) Vacancies on the commission must be filled in a manner
68 consistent with the original appointments.

69 (4) All appointments to the commission must be made no later
70 than September 1, * * * 2018. After the members are appointed,
71 the Chair of the Department of Family Medicine shall set a date
72 for the organizational meeting that is mutually acceptable to the
73 majority of the commission members. The organizational meeting
74 shall be for the purposes of organizing the commission and
75 establishing rules for transacting its business. A majority of
76 the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum at all
77 commission meetings. An affirmative vote of a majority of the
78 members present and voting shall be required in the adoption of
79 rules, reports and in any other actions taken by the commission.
80 At the organizational meeting, the commission shall elect a chair
81 and vice chair from the members appointed according to paragraphs
82 (a) through (d) of subsection (1). The chair shall serve for a
83 term of two (2) years, upon the expiration of which the vice chair
84 shall assume the office of chair.

85 (5) After the organizational meeting, the commission shall
86 hold no less than two (2) meetings annually.

87 (6) The commission may form an executive committee for the
88 purpose of transacting business that must be conducted before the
89 next regularly scheduled meeting of the commission. All actions
90 taken by the executive committee must be ratified by the
91 commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting.



(7) Members of the commission shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to the availability of funding, for mileage and actual and necessary expenses incurred in attending meetings of the commission.

(8) Funding for the establishment and continued operation of the program and commission shall be appropriated out of any money in the General Fund not already appropriated to the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

SECTION 3. Section 37-144-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-144-5. The Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

(a) Developing the administrative policy for the commission and the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program;

(b) Promulgating rules and regulations, with the advice and consent of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, pertaining to the implementation and operation of the Rural Physicians Scholarship Program;

(c) Developing and implementing strategies and activities for the identification and recruitment of students and for marketing the program and for the implementation of the program. In developing these strategies, the board shall seek the input of various organizations and entities, including the Mississippi State Medical Association, the Mississippi Academy of



Family Physicians, the Mississippi Chapters of the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of OB-GYN, the Mississippi Medical and Surgical Association * * *, the Mississippi Osteopathic Medicine Association and the American College of Psychiatrists;

(d) Establishing a budget, with the advice and consent of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, to support the activities of the program and periodically reviewing and if appropriate, revising, the scholarship and other stipends offered through the program;

(e) Advising the University of Mississippi Medical Center regarding hiring an executive director and support staff necessary for the commission's work. The commission shall nominate at least two (2) individuals to serve as executive director;

(f) Reviewing participants progress in the program and mentoring students and physicians participating in the program;

(g) Developing and participating in programs that provide initial practice support in collaboration with other interested professional organizations;

(h) The commission shall have the authority through use of generally applicable definitions, to designate an area of the state as underserved or rural. The method by which these designations shall be made shall be contained in rules and regulations promulgated by the commission.



142 **SECTION 4.** Section 37-144-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
143 amended as follows:

144 37-144-7. (1) The commission shall develop and implement
145 policies and procedures designed to recruit, identify and enroll
146 undergraduate students who demonstrate necessary interest,
147 commitment, aptitude and academic achievement to pursue careers as
148 family physicians or other generalist physicians or psychiatrists
149 in rural or medically underserved areas of Mississippi, and to
150 develop and implement the programs designed to foster successful
151 entry of participants into medical school, completion of medical
152 school, enrollment into and completion of family medicine or other
153 generalist residency, and establishment and maintenance of a
154 career in family medicine, psychiatry or other generalist
155 specialty in a rural or underserved area of Mississippi.

156 (2) The commission shall have the authority through use of
157 generally applicable definitions, to designate an area of the
158 state as underserved or rural.

159 (3) The commission, in conjunction with the University of
160 Mississippi Medical Center, shall have the authority to provide
161 students selected for scholarship funding with faculty mentors and
162 other programs designed to enhance the students' likelihood of
163 admission to the medical school. The commission and the
164 University of Mississippi Medical Center will develop coursework
165 that will provide scholarship students with the skills necessary



for sustained and successful medical practice in rural Mississippi.

(4) Each applicant for admission to the program must submit an application to the commission that conforms to requirements established by the commission.

(5) In selecting participants for the program, the board may only accept an applicant if his or her academic record and other characteristics, if given consideration by the University of Mississippi School of Medicine Admissions Committee, would be considered credible and competitive.

(6) An applicant for the program may be admitted only upon a majority vote of the members of the commission.

(7) Not less than fifteen (15) students will be admitted to the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program each year, provided that there are fifteen (15) or more qualified applicants for the program.

SECTION 5. Section 37-144-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-144-17. (1) Upon completion of residency, a participant in the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program must proceed to enter the practice of medicine in a rural or underserved area in Mississippi, as defined by the commission and consistent with generally acceptable designations. If an area experiences significant changes in its medical or general community which are not reflected by health professional shortage



191 area (HPSA) or medically underserved area (MUA) rural designation,
192 the commission may receive testimony and, in its discretion, may
193 qualify the area as an underserved or rural area to allow the
194 program participant to fulfill his or her practice obligation.

195 (2) Upon entering the practice of medicine including the
196 practice of psychiatry, a participant in the program must serve in
197 a health professional shortage area (HPSA), medically underserved
198 area (MUA), or rural area otherwise approved for practice under
199 subsection (1) of this section for a number of years which
200 corresponds to the number of years, not to exceed five (5), for
201 which the participant received funding through the program. A
202 participant who completes residency outside the State of
203 Mississippi who fails to enter the practice of medicine as
204 required under this section shall be deemed in breach of contract
205 and shall be liable for the immediate repayment of all financial
206 assistance provided to the participant through the Mississippi
207 Rural Physicians Scholarship Program, including assistance
208 provided during undergraduate school, as well as in medical or
209 osteopathic school, along with other penalties that may be
210 prescribed in policy by the board. Any participant who fails to
211 complete the period of practice for which he or she is obligated
212 to provide services in a health professional shortage area (HPSA)
213 or a medically underserved area (MUA) in exchange for financial
214 assistance received through the Mississippi Rural Physicians
215 Scholarship Program shall be liable for the repayment of all



216 financial assistance provided to the participant through the
217 program, along with other penalties that may be prescribed by the
218 commission, an amount which shall be reduced on a pro rata basis
219 for actual years of practice by the physician in the area
220 designated by the commission.

221 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
222 and after July 1, 2018.

