

By: Representative Hines

To: Universities and  
Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 123

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE EACH PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE TO  
 2 PROVIDE ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS TO ALL MEMBERS OF EACH  
 3 SCHOOL SPONSORED ATHLETIC ORGANIZATION GOVERNED BY THE RULES AND  
 4 REGULATIONS OF A NATIONAL OR REGIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATION OR  
 5 CONFERENCE; TO PRESCRIBE THE MANNER BY WHICH THE ASSESSMENT MAY BE  
 6 ADMINISTERED, THE TOOLS USED IN THE ASSESSMENTS AND BY WHOM THE  
 7 ASSESSMENT MAY BE ADMINISTERED; TO REQUIRE EACH UNIVERSITY AND  
 8 COLLEGE TO PARTNER WITH A LOCAL OR REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
 9 SPECIALIST TO ASSIST IN ADMINISTERING THE REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS OR  
 10 SCREENINGS AND TO PROVIDE BACKEND COUNSELING SERVICES AND COURSE  
 11 OF CARE PLANS; TO PERMIT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES TO CONSULT THE  
 12 DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND OTHER  
 13 FORMS OF ASSISTANCE THROUGH STATE PROVIDERS OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
 14 SERVICES; TO REQUIRE EACH UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE TO PROVIDE MENTAL  
 15 HEALTH ASSESSMENTS TO MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL STUDENT POPULATION  
 16 WHO HAVE AN ARREST RECORD; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

18 **SECTION 1.** (1) Each state institution of higher learning  
 19 and public community or junior college is required to provide  
 20 annual mental health assessment to all members of each school  
 21 sponsored athletic organization which is governed by the rules and  
 22 regulations of a national or regional sports association or  
 23 conference, or both association and conference.

24 (2) The mental health assessment shall be administered in  
 25 order to provide a complete overview of the student athlete



26 overall emotional state by determining how well the student  
27 athlete is able to think, reason and remember (cognitive  
28 functioning). While the assessment may be performed through a  
29 series of questions asked by a doctor for verbal or written  
30 responses, the student athlete's appearance, disposition, mood,  
31 behavior and ability to express oneself may also be considered as  
32 criteria factored into the complete assessment, and may also  
33 include digital screening tools or lab tests, such as tests of  
34 blood or urine samples.

35 (3) (a) The mental health assessment may be performed by  
36 any of the following:

- 37 (i) A primary care doctor;
- 38 (ii) A psychologist;
- 39 (iii) A psychiatrist;
- 40 (iv) A social worker;
- 41 (v) A behavioral therapist; or
- 42 (vi) A mental health counselor.

43 (b) The results of the mental health assessment shall  
44 remain confidential.

45 (4) Each state institution of higher learning and public  
46 community or junior college shall partner with a local or regional  
47 behavioral health specialist to assist the postsecondary  
48 institution to provide the required assessments and/or screenings  
49 and provide counseling and direction, a course of care for those  
50 student athletes who evidence mental health issues. The



51 postsecondary institutions may also consult the Mississippi  
52 Department of Mental Health to seek additional resources and forms  
53 of assistance through state providers of behavioral and mental  
54 health services.

55 (5) Each state institution of higher learning and public  
56 community or junior college shall also provide mental health  
57 assessments to any students enrolled in the general student  
58 population of the university or college who has an arrest record,  
59 whether the arrest occurred before or during the course of the  
60 student's enrollment at the university or college. Upon being  
61 informed of a student's arrest the university or college, in  
62 addition to requiring the offending student to undergo a mental  
63 health assessment, may also recommend the student's participation  
64 in a mental health diversion pilot program as established under  
65 provisions of the Rivers McGraw Act.

66 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
67 and after July 1, 2019.

