

By: Representative Byrd

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 150

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO AUTHORIZE LOAN FORGIVENESS TO INDIVIDUALS PROVIDING
3 INSTRUCTIONAL OR CLINICAL SERVICE AS A LICENSED DYSLEXIA THERAPIST
4 IN A PUBLIC OR ELIGIBLE NONPUBLIC SCHOOL FOR THE MISSISSIPPI
5 DYSLEXIA FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 37-106-71. (1) There is established the Mississippi
10 Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program for the purpose of
11 identifying and recruiting qualified university and college
12 students from the state for schooling in education with a focus on
13 dyslexia therapy.

14 (2) The receipt of a forgivable loan under the program shall
15 be solely limited to those students who are enrolled in or who
16 have been accepted for enrollment into a master's degree program
17 of study for dyslexia therapy at any public or private institution
18 of higher learning within the State of Mississippi at the time an
19 application for a forgivable loan is filed with the board.



20 (3) The annual amount of the forgivable loan award shall be
21 equal to the total cost for tuition, materials and fees at the
22 college or university in which the student is enrolled. Awards
23 made to nonresidents of the state shall not include any amount
24 assessed by the college or university for out-of-state tuition.

25 (4) Upon completion of the master's program and licensure
26 requirements, a forgivable loan recipient who has not been
27 previously licensed by the State Department of Education shall
28 render service in an instructional or clinical capacity as a
29 licensed * * * dyslexia * * * therapist in a public school
30 district in the state or an eligible nonpublic school as defined
31 by Section 37-173-1 and meets the criteria established in Section
32 37-173-17, not to exceed five (5) recipients rendering
33 instructional or clinical services in a nonpublic school at any
34 time.

35 (5) Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as
36 those outlined in Section 37-106-53.

37 (6) The board shall prepare and submit a report to the
38 Legislature by January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, outlining
39 in detail the number of participants who have received forgivable
40 loans under the program, the record of service provided by those
41 recipients as they transition out of the degree program into the
42 public school districts of this state, and the projection for
43 expanding the program to include more participants annually as
44 determined by the need for such qualified professionals in the



45 public school setting. Additionally, the report shall include a
46 summary of allocations and expenditures for the administration of
47 the program and the total amount of funds issued to recipients of
48 forgivable loans from the inception of the program until such time
49 as the report has been prepared and submitted to the Legislature.

50 (7) The Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan
51 Program shall be administered in the same manner as the Critical
52 Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program established under Section
53 37-106-55 and shall be incorporated into the Critical Needs
54 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program for all purposes.

55 (8) Funding for the establishment and continued operation of
56 the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program shall
57 be administered by the board through a special fund established
58 within the Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program. The
59 board may accept and receive monetary gifts and donations from any
60 source, public or private, which such funds shall be deposited in
61 the special fund for the benefit of the Mississippi Dyslexia
62 Education Forgivable Loan Program with the Critical Needs Teacher
63 Forgivable Loan Program.

64 (9) No more than twenty (20) students per cohort shall be
65 selected annually to be admitted into the program for receipt of
66 forgivable loans beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year.
67 However, forgivable loans awarded under the program shall be
68 provided only to students who have been accepted into a Dyslexia
69 Therapy Master's Degree Cohort Program approved by the State



70 Department of Education that provides instructional training as
71 required under Chapter 173, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972,
72 for dyslexia therapy in preparation of those cohort students for
73 AA licensure by the department.

74 (10) As part of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education
75 Forgivable Loan Program, the State Department of Education is
76 authorized and directed, subject to the availability of funds
77 specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, to provide
78 financial assistance for the recruitment, placement and employment
79 of qualified licensed dyslexia therapy professionals identified
80 under Section 37-173-15(1) (b), Mississippi Code of 1972, in order
81 to provide dyslexia screening, evaluation and therapy services to
82 the students attending school in the school district. Said
83 funding may be used to purchase curriculum materials and supplies
84 for dyslexia therapy services. Said funding shall be provided to
85 public school districts upon application therefor regardless of
86 the financial need of the school district in an amount not to
87 exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) annually, and subject
88 to specific appropriation therefor by the Legislature. In order
89 to qualify for such funds, the school district shall meet the
90 following criteria:

91 (a) Use licensed dyslexia therapists or individuals
92 participating in an approved training program resulting in State
93 Department of Education licensure to provide dyslexia therapy to
94 students diagnosed with dyslexia;



95 (b) Use daily Orton-Gillingham-based therapy;
96 (c) Have school leadership trained in dyslexia; and
97 (d) Have a current School Program Verification and
98 Assurances form on file with the State Department of Education,
99 Office of Curriculum and Instruction. Procedures and standards
100 for the application for such funds shall be established by
101 regulations developed and issued by the State Board of Education.

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

