

**Adopted  
COMMITTEE AMENDMENT NO 1 PROPOSED TO**

**Senate Bill No. 2576**

**BY: Committee**

**Amend by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting  
in lieu thereof the following:**

10           **SECTION 1.** Section 97-35-47, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
11 amended as follows:  
12           97-35-47. It shall be unlawful for any person to report a  
13 crime or any element of a crime, including an allegation of child  
14 abuse or neglect, to any law enforcement agency or officer, the  
15 Department of Child Protection Services, or any officer of any  
16 court, by any means, knowing that \* \* \* the report is false. A  
17 violation of this section shall be punishable by imprisonment in  
18 the county jail not to exceed one (1) year or by fine not to  
19 exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or both. In addition to



20 any fine and imprisonment, and upon proper showing made to the  
21 court, the defendant shall be ordered to pay as restitution to the  
22 law enforcement agency reimbursement for any reasonable costs  
23 directly related to the investigation of the falsely reported  
24 crime and the prosecution of any person convicted under this  
25 section.

26 A report is false under this section if no rational argument  
27 can be advanced in its support, when it is unsupported by any  
28 credible evidence, when a reasonable person could not have  
29 expected its success, or when it is completely untenable.

30 **SECTION 2.** Section 43-21-257, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
31 amended as follows:

32 43-21-257. (1) Unless otherwise provided in this section,  
33 any record involving children, including valid and invalid  
34 complaints, and the contents thereof maintained by the Department  
35 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services, or any other state agency,  
36 shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed except as  
37 provided in Section 43-21-261.

38 (2) The \* \* \* Department of Child Protection Services shall  
39 maintain a state central registry containing the number and  
40 disposition of all cases together with such other useful  
41 information regarding those cases as may be requested and is  
42 obtainable from the records of the youth court. The \* \* \*  
43 Department of Child Protection Services shall annually publish a  
44 statistical record of the number and disposition of all cases, but



45 the names or identity of any children shall not be disclosed in  
46 the reports or records. The \* \* \* Department of Child Protection  
47 Services shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to carry out  
48 this subsection. The central registry files and the contents  
49 thereof shall be confidential and shall not be open to public  
50 inspection. Any person who discloses or encourages the disclosure  
51 of any record involving children from the central registry shall  
52 be subject to the penalty in Section 43-21-267. The youth court  
53 shall furnish, upon forms provided by the \* \* \* Department of  
54 Child Protection Services, the necessary information, and these  
55 completed forms shall be forwarded to the \* \* \* Department of  
56 Child Protection Services.

57 (3) The Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall  
58 maintain a state central registry on neglect and abuse cases  
59 containing (a) the name, address and age of each child, (b) the  
60 nature of the harm reported, (c) the name and address of the  
61 person responsible for the care of the child, and (d) the name and  
62 address of the substantiated perpetrator of the harm reported.  
63 "Substantiated perpetrator" shall be defined as an individual who  
64 has committed an act(s) of sexual abuse or physical abuse that  
65 would otherwise be deemed as a felony or any child neglect that  
66 would be deemed as a threat to life, as determined upon  
67 investigation by the Office of Family and Children's Services.  
68 "Substantiation" for the purposes of the Mississippi Department  
69 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services Central Registry shall require



70 a criminal conviction or an adjudication by a youth court judge or  
71 court of competent jurisdiction, ordering that the name of the  
72 perpetrator be listed on the central registry, pending due  
73 process. The Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall  
74 adopt such rules and administrative procedures, especially those  
75 procedures to afford due process to individuals who have been  
76 named as substantiated perpetrators before the release of their  
77 name from the central registry, as may be necessary to carry out  
78 this subsection. The central registry shall be confidential and  
79 shall not be open to public inspection. Any person who discloses  
80 or encourages the disclosure of any record involving children from  
81 the central registry without following the rules and  
82 administrative procedures of the department shall be subject to  
83 the penalty in Section 43-21-267. The Department of \* \* \* Child  
84 Protection Services and its employees are exempt from any civil  
85 liability as a result of any action taken pursuant to the  
86 compilation and/or release of information on the central registry  
87 under this section and any other applicable section of the code,  
88 unless determined that an employee has willfully and maliciously  
89 violated the rules and administrative procedures of the  
90 department, pertaining to the central registry or any section of  
91 this code. If an employee is determined to have willfully and  
92 maliciously performed such a violation, said employee shall not be  
93 exempt from civil liability in this regard.



94 (4) The Mississippi State Department of Health may release  
95 the findings of investigations into allegations of abuse within  
96 licensed day care centers made under the provisions of Section  
97 43-21-353(8) to any parent of a child who is enrolled in the day  
98 care center at the time of the alleged abuse or at the time the  
99 request for information is made. The findings of any such  
100 investigation may also be released to parents who are considering  
101 placing children in the day care center. No information  
102 concerning those investigations may contain the names or  
103 identifying information of individual children.

104 The Department of Health shall not be held civilly liable for  
105 the release of information on any findings, recommendations or  
106 actions taken pursuant to investigations of abuse that have been  
107 conducted under Section 43-21-353(8).

108 **SECTION 3.** Section 43-21-261, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
109 amended as follows:

110 43-21-261. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this  
111 section, records involving children shall not be disclosed, other  
112 than to necessary staff of the youth court or a Court-Appointed  
113 Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer that may be assigned in an abuse  
114 and neglect case, except pursuant to an order of the youth court  
115 specifying the person or persons to whom the records may be  
116 disclosed, the extent of the records which may be disclosed and  
117 the purpose of the disclosure. Such court orders for disclosure  
118 shall be limited to those instances in which the youth court



119 concludes, in its discretion, that disclosure is required for the  
120 best interests of the child, the public safety \* \* \*, the  
121 functioning of the youth court, or to identify a person who  
122 knowingly made a false accusation of child abuse or neglect, and  
123 then only to the following persons:

124 (a) The judge of another youth court or member of  
125 another youth court staff;

126 (b) The court of the parties in a child custody or  
127 adoption cause in another court;

128 (c) A judge of any other court or members of another  
129 court staff;

130 (d) Representatives of a public or private agency  
131 providing supervision or having custody of the child under order  
132 of the youth court;

133 (e) Any person engaged in a bona fide research purpose,  
134 provided that no information identifying the subject of the  
135 records shall be made available to the researcher unless it is  
136 absolutely essential to the research purpose and the judge gives  
137 prior written approval, and the child, through his or her  
138 representative, gives permission to release the information;

139 (f) The Mississippi Department of Employment Security,  
140 or its duly authorized representatives, for the purpose of a  
141 child's enrollment into the Job Corps Training Program as  
142 authorized by Title IV of the Comprehensive Employment Training  
143 Act of 1973 (29 USCS Section 923 et seq.). However, no records,



144 reports, investigations or information derived therefrom  
145 pertaining to child abuse or neglect shall be disclosed;

146 (g) To any person pursuant to a finding by a judge of  
147 the youth court of compelling circumstances affecting the health,  
148 safety or well-being of a child and that such disclosure is in the  
149 best interests of the child or an adult who was formerly the  
150 subject of a youth court delinquency proceeding \* \* \*;

151 (h) To a person who was the subject of a knowingly made  
152 false allegation of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a  
153 conviction of a perpetrator in accordance with Section 97-35-47 or  
154 which allegation was referred by the department of child  
155 protection services to a prosecutor or law enforcement official in  
156 accordance with the provisions of this Section 43-21-353(4).

157 Law enforcement agencies may disclose information to the  
158 public concerning the taking of a child into custody for the  
159 commission of a delinquent act without the necessity of an order  
160 from the youth court. The information released shall not identify  
161 the child or his address unless the information involves a child  
162 convicted as an adult.

163 (2) Any records involving children which are disclosed under  
164 an order of the youth court or pursuant to the terms of this  
165 section and the contents thereof shall be kept confidential by the  
166 person or agency to whom the record is disclosed unless otherwise  
167 provided in the order. Any further disclosure of any records



168 involving children shall be made only under an order of the youth  
169 court as provided in this section.

170 (3) Upon request, the parent, guardian or custodian of the  
171 child who is the subject of a youth court cause or any attorney  
172 for such parent, guardian or custodian, shall have the right to  
173 inspect any record, report or investigation which is to be  
174 considered by the youth court at a hearing, except that the  
175 identity of the reporter shall not be released, nor the name of  
176 any other person where the person or agency making the information  
177 available finds that disclosure of the information would be likely  
178 to endanger the life or safety of such person. The attorney for  
179 the parent, guardian or custodian of the child, upon request,  
180 shall be provided a copy of any record, report or  
181 investigation \* \* \* that is to be considered by the youth court at  
182 a hearing, but the identity of the reporter must be redacted and  
183 the name of any other person must also be redacted if the person  
184 or agency making the information available finds that disclosure  
185 of the information would be likely to endanger the life, safety or  
186 well-being of the person. A record provided to the attorney under  
187 this section \* \* \* must remain in the attorney's control and the  
188 attorney may not provide copies or access to another person or  
189 entity without prior consent of a court with appropriate  
190 jurisdiction.

191 (4) Upon request, the child who is the subject of a youth  
192 court cause shall have the right to have his counsel inspect and





193 copy any record, report or investigation which is filed with the  
194 youth court or which is to be considered by the youth court at a  
195 hearing.

196 (5) (a) The youth court prosecutor or prosecutors, the  
197 county attorney, the district attorney, the youth court defender  
198 or defenders, or any attorney representing a child shall have the  
199 right to inspect and copy any law enforcement record involving  
200 children.

201 (b) The Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services  
202 shall disclose to a county prosecuting attorney or district  
203 attorney any and all records resulting from an investigation into  
204 suspected child abuse or neglect when the case has been referred  
205 by the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services to the county  
206 prosecuting attorney or district attorney for criminal  
207 prosecution.

208 (c) Agency records made confidential under the  
209 provisions of this section may be disclosed to a court of  
210 competent jurisdiction.

211 (d) Records involving children shall be disclosed to  
212 the Division of Victim Compensation of the Office of the Attorney  
213 General upon the division's request without order of the youth  
214 court for purposes of determination of eligibility for victim  
215 compensation benefits.

216 (6) Information concerning an investigation into a report of  
217 child abuse or child neglect may be disclosed by the Department



218 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services without order of the youth  
219 court to any attorney, physician, dentist, intern, resident,  
220 nurse, psychologist, social worker, family protection worker,  
221 family protection specialist, child caregiver, minister, law  
222 enforcement officer, public or private school employee making that  
223 report pursuant to Section 43-21-353(1) if the reporter has a  
224 continuing professional relationship with the child and a need for  
225 such information in order to protect or treat the child.

226 (7) Information concerning an investigation into a report of  
227 child abuse or child neglect may be disclosed without further  
228 order of the youth court to any interagency child abuse task force  
229 established in any county or municipality by order of the youth  
230 court of that county or municipality.

231 (8) Names and addresses of juveniles twice adjudicated as  
232 delinquent for an act which would be a felony if committed by an  
233 adult or for the unlawful possession of a firearm shall not be  
234 held confidential and shall be made available to the public.

235 (9) Names and addresses of juveniles adjudicated as  
236 delinquent for murder, manslaughter, burglary, arson, armed  
237 robbery, aggravated assault, any sex offense as defined in Section  
238 45-33-23, for any violation of Section 41-29-139(a)(1) or for any  
239 violation of Section 63-11-30, shall not be held confidential and  
240 shall be made available to the public.

241 (10) The judges of the circuit and county courts, and  
242 presentence investigators for the circuit courts, as provided in



243 Section 47-7-9, shall have the right to inspect any youth court  
244 records of a person convicted of a crime for sentencing purposes  
245 only.

246 (11) The victim of an offense committed by a child who is  
247 the subject of a youth court cause shall have the right to be  
248 informed of the child's disposition by the youth court.

249 (12) A classification hearing officer of the State  
250 Department of Corrections, as provided in Section 47-5-103, shall  
251 have the right to inspect any youth court records, excluding abuse  
252 and neglect records, of any offender in the custody of the  
253 department who as a child or minor was a juvenile offender or was  
254 the subject of a youth court cause of action, and the State Parole  
255 Board, as provided in Section 47-7-17, shall have the right to  
256 inspect such records when the offender becomes eligible for  
257 parole.

258 (13) The youth court shall notify the Department of Public  
259 Safety of the name, and any other identifying information such  
260 department may require, of any child who is adjudicated delinquent  
261 as a result of a violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances  
262 Law.

263 (14) The Administrative Office of Courts shall have the  
264 right to inspect any youth court records in order that the number  
265 of youthful offenders, abused, neglected, truant and dependent  
266 children, as well as children in need of special care and children  
267 in need of supervision, may be tracked with specificity through



268 the youth court and adult justice system, and to utilize tracking  
269 forms for such purpose.

270 (15) Upon a request by a youth court, the Administrative  
271 Office of Courts shall disclose all information at its disposal  
272 concerning any previous youth court intakes alleging that a child  
273 was a delinquent child, child in need of supervision, child in  
274 need of special care, truant child, abused child or neglected  
275 child, as well as any previous youth court adjudications for the  
276 same and all dispositional information concerning a child who at  
277 the time of such request comes under the jurisdiction of the youth  
278 court making such request.

279 (16) The Administrative Office of Courts may, in its  
280 discretion, disclose to the Department of Public Safety any or all  
281 of the information involving children contained in the office's  
282 youth court data management system known as Mississippi Youth  
283 Court Information Delivery System or "MYCIDS."

284 (17) The youth courts of the state shall disclose to the  
285 Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and  
286 Expenditure Review (PEER) any youth court records in order that  
287 the number of youthful offenders, abused, neglected, truant and  
288 dependent children, as well as children in need of special care  
289 and children in need of supervision, may be tracked with  
290 specificity through the youth court and adult justice system, and  
291 to utilize tracking forms for such purpose. The disclosure  
292 prescribed in this subsection shall not require a court order and



293 shall be made in sortable, electronic format where possible. The  
294 PEER Committee may seek the assistance of the Administrative  
295 Office of Courts in seeking this information. The PEER Committee  
296 shall not disclose the identities of any youth who have been  
297 adjudicated in the youth courts of the state and shall only use  
298 the disclosed information for the purpose of monitoring the  
299 effectiveness and efficiency of programs established to assist  
300 adjudicated youth, and to ascertain the incidence of adjudicated  
301 youth who become adult offenders.

302 (18) In every case where an abuse or neglect allegation has  
303 been made, the confidentiality provisions of this section shall  
304 not apply to prohibit access to a child's records by any state  
305 regulatory agency, any state or local prosecutorial agency or law  
306 enforcement agency; however, no identifying information concerning  
307 the child in question may be released to the public by such agency  
308 except as otherwise provided herein.

309 (19) In every case where there is any indication or  
310 suggestion of either abuse or neglect and a child's physical  
311 condition is medically labeled as medically "serious" or  
312 "critical" or a child dies, the confidentiality provisions of this  
313 section shall not apply. In cases of child deaths, the following  
314 information may be released by the Mississippi Department of \* \* \*  
315 Child Protection Services: (a) child's name; (b) address or  
316 location; (c) verification from the Department of \* \* \* Child  
317 Protection Services of case status (no case or involvement, case



318 exists, open or active case, case closed); (d) if a case exists,  
319 the type of report or case (physical abuse, neglect, etc.), date  
320 of intake(s) and investigation(s), and case disposition  
321 (substantiated or unsubstantiated). Notwithstanding the  
322 aforesaid, the confidentiality provisions of this section shall  
323 continue if there is a pending or planned investigation by any  
324 local, state or federal governmental agency or institution.

325 (20) Any member of a foster care review board designated by  
326 the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall have the  
327 right to inspect youth court records relating to the abuse,  
328 neglect or child in need of supervision cases assigned to such  
329 member for review.

330 (21) Information concerning an investigation into a report  
331 of child abuse or child neglect may be disclosed without further  
332 order of the youth court in any administrative or due process  
333 hearing held, pursuant to Section 43-21-257, by the Department  
334 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services for individuals whose names  
335 will be placed on the central registry as substantiated  
336 perpetrators.

337 **SECTION 4.** Section 43-21-353, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
338 amended as follows:

339 43-21-353. (1) Any attorney, physician, dentist, intern,  
340 resident, nurse, psychologist, social worker, family protection  
341 worker, family protection specialist, child caregiver, minister,  
342 law enforcement officer, public or private school employee or any



343 other person having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a  
344 neglected child or an abused child, shall cause an oral report to  
345 be made immediately by telephone or otherwise and followed as soon  
346 thereafter as possible by a report in writing to the Department  
347 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services, and immediately a referral  
348 shall be made by the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services  
349 to the youth court intake unit, which unit shall promptly comply  
350 with Section 43-21-357. In the course of an investigation, at the  
351 initial time of contact with the individual(s) about whom a report  
352 has been made under this Youth Court Act or with the individual(s)  
353 responsible for the health or welfare of a child about whom a  
354 report has been made under this chapter, the Department of \* \* \*  
355 Child Protection Services shall inform the individual of the  
356 specific complaints or allegations made against the individual.  
357 Consistent with subsection (4), the identity of the person who  
358 reported his or her suspicion shall not be disclosed at that  
359 point. Where appropriate, the Department of \* \* \* Child  
360 Protection Services shall additionally make a referral to the  
361 youth court prosecutor.

362       Upon receiving a report that a child has been sexually  
363 abused, or burned, tortured, mutilated or otherwise physically  
364 abused in such a manner as to cause serious bodily harm, or upon  
365 receiving any report of abuse that would be a felony under state  
366 or federal law, the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services  
367 shall immediately notify the law enforcement agency in whose



368 jurisdiction the abuse occurred and shall notify the appropriate  
369 prosecutor within forty-eight (48) hours, and the Department  
370 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall have the duty to provide  
371 the law enforcement agency all the names and facts known at the  
372 time of the report; this duty shall be of a continuing nature.  
373 The law enforcement agency and the Department of \* \* \* Child  
374 Protection Services shall investigate the reported abuse  
375 immediately and shall file a preliminary report with the  
376 appropriate prosecutor's office within twenty-four (24) hours and  
377 shall make additional reports as new or additional information or  
378 evidence becomes available. The Department of \* \* \* Child  
379 Protection Services shall advise the clerk of the youth court and  
380 the youth court prosecutor of all cases of abuse reported to the  
381 department within seventy-two (72) hours and shall update such  
382 report as information becomes available.

383 (2) Any report to the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection  
384 Services shall contain the names and addresses of the child and  
385 his parents or other persons responsible for his care, if known,  
386 the child's age, the nature and extent of the child's injuries,  
387 including any evidence of previous injuries \* \* \*, any other  
388 information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the  
389 injury, and the identity of the perpetrator.

390 (3) The Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall  
391 maintain a statewide incoming wide-area telephone service or  
392 similar service for the purpose of receiving reports of suspected





393 cases of child abuse; provided that any attorney, physician,  
394 dentist, intern, resident, nurse, psychologist, social worker,  
395 family protection worker, family protection specialist, child  
396 caregiver, minister, law enforcement officer or public or private  
397 school employee who is required to report under subsection (1) of  
398 this section shall report in the manner required in subsection  
399 (1).

400 (4) Reports of abuse and neglect made under this chapter and  
401 the identity of the reporter are confidential except when the  
402 court in which the investigation report is filed, in its  
403 discretion, determines the testimony of the person reporting to be  
404 material to a judicial proceeding or when the identity of the  
405 reporter is released to law enforcement agencies and the  
406 appropriate prosecutor pursuant to subsection (1). Reports made  
407 under this section to any law enforcement agency or prosecutorial  
408 officer are for the purpose of criminal investigation and  
409 prosecution only and no information from these reports may be  
410 released to the public except as provided by Section 43-21-261.  
411 Disclosure of any information by the prosecutor shall be according  
412 to the Mississippi Uniform Rules of Circuit and County Court  
413 Procedure. The identity of the reporting party shall not be  
414 disclosed to anyone other than law enforcement officers or  
415 prosecutors without an order from the appropriate youth court.  
416 Any person disclosing any reports made under this section in a  
417 manner not expressly provided for in this section or Section



418 43-21-261 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to the  
419 penalties prescribed by Section 43-21-267. Notwithstanding the  
420 confidentiality of the reporter's identity under this section, the  
421 Department of Child Protection Services may disclose a reporter's  
422 identity to the appropriate law enforcement agency or prosecutor  
423 if the department has reason to suspect the reporter has made a  
424 fraudulent report, and Child Protection Services must provide to  
425 the subject of the alleged fraudulent report written notification  
426 of the disclosure.

427 (5) All final dispositions of law enforcement investigations  
428 described in subsection (1) of this section shall be determined  
429 only by the appropriate prosecutor or court. All final  
430 dispositions of investigations by the Department of \* \* \* Child  
431 Protection Services as described in subsection (1) of this section  
432 shall be determined only by the youth court. Reports made under  
433 subsection (1) of this section by the Department of \* \* \* Child  
434 Protection Services to the law enforcement agency and to the  
435 district attorney's office shall include the following, if known  
436 to the department:

- 437 (a) The name and address of the child;
- 438 (b) The names and addresses of the parents;
- 439 (c) The name and address of the suspected perpetrator;
- 440 (d) The names and addresses of all witnesses, including
- 441 the reporting party if a material witness to the abuse;



442 (e) A brief statement of the facts indicating that the  
443 child has been abused and any other information from the agency  
444 files or known to the family protection worker or family  
445 protection specialist making the investigation, including medical  
446 records or other records, which may assist law enforcement or the  
447 district attorney in investigating and/or prosecuting the case;  
448 and

449 (f) What, if any, action is being taken by the  
450 Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services.

451 (6) In any investigation of a report made under this chapter  
452 of the abuse or neglect of a child as defined in Section  
453 43-21-105(m), the Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services  
454 may request the appropriate law enforcement officer with  
455 jurisdiction to accompany the department in its investigation, and  
456 in such cases the law enforcement officer shall comply with such  
457 request.

458 (7) Anyone who willfully violates any provision of this  
459 section shall be, upon being found guilty, punished by a fine not  
460 to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or by imprisonment in  
461 jail not to exceed one (1) year, or both.

462 (8) If a report is made directly to the Department of \* \* \*  
463 Child Protection Services that a child has been abused or  
464 neglected in an out-of-home setting, a referral shall be made  
465 immediately to the law enforcement agency in whose jurisdiction  
466 the abuse occurred and the department shall notify the district



467 attorney's office within forty-eight (48) hours of such report.  
468 The Department of \* \* \* Child Protection Services shall  
469 investigate the out-of-home setting report of abuse or neglect to  
470 determine whether the child who is the subject of the report, or  
471 other children in the same environment, comes within the  
472 jurisdiction of the youth court and shall report to the youth  
473 court the department's findings and recommendation as to whether  
474 the child who is the subject of the report or other children in  
475 the same environment require the protection of the youth court.  
476 The law enforcement agency shall investigate the reported abuse  
477 immediately and shall file a preliminary report with the district  
478 attorney's office within forty-eight (48) hours and shall make  
479 additional reports as new information or evidence becomes  
480 available. If the out-of-home setting is a licensed facility, an  
481 additional referral shall be made by the Department of \* \* \* Child  
482 Protection Services to the licensing agency. The licensing agency  
483 shall investigate the report and shall provide the Department  
484 of \* \* \* Child Protection Services, the law enforcement agency and  
485 the district attorney's office with their written findings from  
486 such investigation as well as that licensing agency's  
487 recommendations and actions taken.

488 (9) If a child protective investigation does not result in  
489 an out-of-home placement, a child protective investigator must  
490 provide information to the parent or guardians about community



491 service programs that provide respite care, voluntary guardianship  
492 or other support services for families in crisis.

493 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
494 and after July 1, 2019.

**Further, amend by striking the title in its entirety and  
inserting in lieu thereof the following:**

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 97-35-47, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT THE FALSE REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT TO THE  
3 DEPARTMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES SHALL BE PUNISHABLE AS A  
4 MISDEMEANOR; TO AMEND SECTIONS 43-21-257, 43-21-261 AND 43-21-353,  
5 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REVISE THE APPROPRIATE RELEASE OF THE  
6 IDENTITY OF A REPORTER WHO KNOWINGLY REPORTED A FALSE ALLEGATION  
7 OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT, AND TO CORRECT REFERENCES TO THE  
8 DEPARTMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

