

By: Representatives Chism, Karriem, Byrd,
Faulkner

To: Military Affairs

HOUSE BILL NO. 322

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A PERMISSIVE PREFERENCE IN PRIVATE
2 EMPLOYMENT FOR CERTAIN VETERANS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE PREFERENCES
3 ESTABLISHED IN THIS ACT ARE NOT CONSIDERED VIOLATIONS OF ANY STATE
4 OR LOCAL EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LAW; AND FOR RELATED
5 PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature intends to establish a
8 permissive preference in private employment for certain veterans.

9 (2) A private employer may adopt an employment policy that
10 gives preference in hiring to the following:

11 (a) An honorably discharged veteran. The term
12 "veteran" means a person who served in the active military, naval
13 or air service and who was discharged or released under honorable
14 conditions only or who later received an upgraded discharge under
15 honorable conditions, notwithstanding any action by the United
16 States Department of Veterans Affairs on individuals discharged or
17 released with other than honorable discharges;

18 (b) The spouse of a person who has a total disability,
19 permanent in nature, resulting from a service-connected disability



20 and who, because of this disability, cannot qualify for
21 employment, and the spouse of a person missing in action, captured
22 in the line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or
23 interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power;

24 (c) The unremarried widow or widower of a veteran who
25 died of a service-connected disability; and

26 (d) The unremarried widow or widower of a member of the
27 United States Armed Forces who died in the line of duty under
28 combat-related conditions.

29 Such policy shall be applied uniformly to employment decisions
30 regarding hiring and promotion.

31 (3) The preferences established in this act are not
32 considered violations of any state or local equal employment
33 opportunity law.

34 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
35 and after July 1, 2020.

