

By: Representative Stamps

To: Public Health and Human
Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 782

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO TRACK
2 FOOD DESERTS WITHIN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, AND TO PROVIDE AN
3 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE BY DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR
4 IDENTIFYING THE LOCATION OF FOOD DESERTS IN THE STATE AND HEALTH
5 ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH FOOD DESERTS; TO DEFINE THE TERM "FOOD
6 DESERT"; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** The State Department of Health shall provide an
9 annual report to the Legislature by December 31 of each year,
10 which identifies the locations of food deserts within the State of
11 Mississippi and provides information about health issues
12 associated with food deserts. If the annual report contains
13 information from the federal government that identifies the
14 locations of food deserts in the state, and provides information
15 on health issues associated with food deserts, then the
16 requirements of this section shall be satisfied. For the
17 purposes of this section, the term "food desert" means an area
18 with a poverty rate of at least twenty percent (20%) and where at
19 least one-third (1/3) of the population lives more than a mile
20 from a supermarket or large grocery store, farmers' market or



21 healthy food provider, and is therefore void of fresh fruit,
22 vegetables and other healthful whole foods, due, in part, to a
23 lack of access and availability of such establishments.

24 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
25 and after July 1, 2021.

