SENATE BILL NO. 2532

AN ACT TO CREATE THE EXPAND MISSISSIPPI CONNECTIVITY FOR
EDUCATION ACT; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL
DEVELOP A PROGRAM WITH THE GOAL TO INCREASE INTERNET CONNECTIVITY
TO STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
IDENTIFY SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT LACK BASIC INTERNET
CONNECTIVITY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE FUNDS
TO THOSE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT ARE RATED AS HAVING
CRITICAL CONNECTIVITY PROBLEMS BEFORE ALLOCATING OTHER FUNDS; AND
FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
"Expand Mississippi Connectivity for Education Act."

SECTION 2. The Legislature finds the following:

(a) The Department of Education shall develop a program
with the goal to increase internet connectivity to students and
schools in the state.

(b) The department shall identify schools and school
districts that lack basic internet connectivity. The department
shall identify which schools have students that do not have
internet connectivity. The department shall rate schools and
school districts by the following two (2) factors:
(i) Whether the school or school districts has basic internet connectivity in each school; and

(ii) Whether students of the school have access to basic internet in their homes or other accessible areas.

(c) The department shall rate the lowest performing schools and school districts as "critical connectivity" rating.

(d) Subject to appropriation, the department shall provide funds to schools to increase broadband access and fiber optic capacity to each student to ensure that each student has the ability to access the internet to complete school work. Funds shall be given first to the schools and school districts that are rated as "critical connectivity problems." After the "critical connectivity problems" schools and school districts are given funds, the department shall give funds to the schools and school districts at its discretion in an effort to reach one hundred percent (100%) connectivity for all schools and school districts.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2021.