

By: Senator(s) Turner-Ford

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2532

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

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

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

13 **SECTION 2.** The Legislature finds the following:

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

17 (b) The department shall identify schools and school
 18 districts that lack basic internet connectivity. The department
 19 shall identify which schools have students that do not have
 20 internet connectivity. The department shall rate schools and
 21 school districts by the following two (2) factors:



22 (i) Whether the school or school districts has
23 basic internet connectivity in each school; and

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

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

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

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

