

By: Senator(s) Whaley, Blackwell, Seymour, McCaughn, Younger, Moran, Harkins, England, Williams, Tate, McLendon, Jackson (11th), Fillingane, Branning, Sparks, DeBar, Simmons (12th), Barnett, Chism

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 2506

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 PROVIDE AN OPEN SEASON ON HARVESTING DEER WITH BOW AND ARROW ON  
3 THE LAST FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 10TH AND  
4 20TH, PROVIDED THAT ONLY LEGAL BUCKS MAY BE HARVESTED THROUGH  
5 TRADITIONAL ARCHERY OR CROSSBOW ONLY, ON PRIVATE AND WILDLIFE  
6 MANAGEMENT AREA LANDS; TO REQUIRE REPORTING OF THE HARVESTED  
7 ANIMALS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
10 amended as follows:

11 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

12 (a) With bow and arrow:

13 (i) The last Friday, Saturday and Sunday between  
14 September 10th and 20th, provided that only legal bucks as defined  
15 in paragraph (e) of this subsection may be harvested through  
16 traditional archery or crossbow only, on private and wildlife  
17 management area lands. There will be mandatory reporting of the  
18 harvested animal.

19 (ii) October 1 through the Friday prior to  
20 Thanksgiving.



21           (b) With guns and with dogs: from the Saturday prior  
22 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

23           (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December  
24 2 through December 15.

25           (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through  
26 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide  
27 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate  
28 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer  
29 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated  
30 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

31           (e) The commission shall establish an extended season  
32 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from  
33 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway  
34 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any  
35 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this  
36 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For  
37 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer  
38 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside  
39 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of  
40 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may regulate the taking of  
41 deer with antlers of four (4) points or less under this paragraph  
42 for the proper management of antlered deer. The commission may  
43 delay the opening date and change the length of bow and arrow  
44 season in paragraph (a) in this area.



45           (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a  
46 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of  
47 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when  
48 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns  
49 and with dogs in paragraph (b).

50           (g) When the open season on deer ends on a Friday, the  
51 commission shall have the authority to extend the season until  
52 thirty (30) minutes after sunset on the following Sunday.

53           (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on  
54 wildlife management areas which it administers.

55           (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of  
56 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation  
57 of the executive director based upon good and substantial  
58 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that  
59 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

60           (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the  
61 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer  
62 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote  
63 of the commission.

64           (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting  
65 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands  
66 under the Deer Management Assistance Program prescribed or  
67 approved by the executive director.

68           (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the  
69 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.



70 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the  
71 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may  
72 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who  
73 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem  
74 wildlife.

75 (5) (a) During any open season on deer with primitive  
76 weapons after November 30, a person may use any legal weapon of  
77 choice on private lands only, if the person is:

78 (i) The title owner of the land;

79 (ii) The lessee of the hunting rights on the land;

80 (iii) A member of a hunting club leasing the  
81 hunting rights on the land; or

82 (iv) A guest of a person specified in subparagraph  
83 (i), (ii) or (iii).

84 (b) If the person is required to have a hunting  
85 license, the person must have a primitive weapon license,  
86 Sportsman's License or a Lifetime Sportsman's License.

87 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
88 and after July 1, 2022.

