

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.

