

By: Representatives Ford (73rd), Yates,  
Anthony, Byrd, Creekmore IV, Darnell, Denton,  
Deweese, Kinkade, McLean, Oliver, Paden,  
Wallace

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 1047

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 DECLARE APRIL AS MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT MONTH; AND FOR RELATED  
3 PURPOSES.

4 WHEREAS, a native plant is one that grows naturally in a  
5 particular region, ecosystem, or habitat without human  
6 introduction, are essential for healthy and diverse ecosystems and  
7 are critical for clean air, water and soil stability; and

8 WHEREAS, native plants are well-adapted to Mississippi's  
9 soils, wetlands, temperatures, precipitation and environmental  
10 conditions, and are the best at conserving and protecting our  
11 environment and adapting to its changes; and

12 WHEREAS, native plants preserve Mississippi's rich biological  
13 heritage, provide shelter, nectar, pollen and seeds that serve as  
14 food for native butterflies, insects, birds and other wildlife in  
15 ways that nonnative plants cannot provide, and they also provide  
16 diversity in form, texture, and color to fit any landscape style,  
17 are hardy and easy to grow once established, and are critical in



18 preventing flooding and erosion through their deep root systems  
19 filtering groundwater; and

20 WHEREAS, nonnative plants do thrive in Mississippi, however,  
21 incorporating too many of them into Mississippi's landscapes has  
22 caused a sharp decline in pollinators and wildlife species, as  
23 native plants provide unique food at specific times for native  
24 wildlife; and

25 WHEREAS, Mississippi is home to more than 2,700 native plant  
26 species, including trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and wildflowers,  
27 but it is difficult to locate many of these native plant species  
28 in our Mississippi nurseries; and

29 WHEREAS, raising awareness of the importance of Mississippi's  
30 native plants will increase Mississippians' access to purchasing  
31 native plants, which will result in planting more native plants in  
32 the state; and

33 WHEREAS, it is essential to recognize the value of  
34 Mississippi's native plants and encourage public awareness of the  
35 many benefits they provide to Mississippi's economy, pollinators,  
36 and the health of Mississippi's environment; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

38 **SECTION 1.** Section 3-3-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
39 amended as follows:

40 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)  
41 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,  
42 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday



43 of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King,  
44 Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February (Washington's  
45 birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate Memorial Day);  
46 the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis'  
47 birthday); the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the first  
48 Monday of September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of November  
49 (Armistice or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by proclamation by the  
50 Governor of Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be  
51 fixed to correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the  
52 United States (Thanksgiving Day); and the twenty-fifth day of  
53 December (Christmas Day). In the event any holiday hereinbefore  
54 declared legal shall fall on Sunday, then the next following day  
55 shall be a legal holiday.

56 (2) In lieu of any one (1) legal holiday provided for in  
57 subsection (1) of this section, with the exception of the third  
58 Monday in January (Robert E. Lee's and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s  
59 birthday) and the eleventh day of November (Armistice or Veterans'  
60 Day), the governing authorities of any municipality or county may  
61 declare, by order spread upon its minutes, Mardi Gras Day or any  
62 one (1) other day during the year, to be a legal holiday.

63 (3) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron Presley Day in  
64 recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron Presley's many  
65 contributions, international recognition and the rich legacy left  
66 to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be a day of



67 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal  
68 holiday.

69 (4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day in  
70 recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto,  
71 who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by  
72 Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of  
73 Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's  
74 187-day journey from the Tombigbee River basin on our state's  
75 eastern boundary, westward to the place of discovery of the  
76 Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall be a day of  
77 commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando de Soto and  
78 European exploration and shall not be recognized as a legal  
79 holiday.

80 (5) Armistice Day (Veterans' Day) shall be observed by  
81 appropriate exercises in all the public schools in the State of  
82 Mississippi. The superintendent of schools of each public school  
83 district is authorized to provide for the appearance of uniformed  
84 military personnel, uniformed veterans or the families of fallen  
85 military personnel/veterans at such public school exercises in  
86 honor of Armistice (Veterans' Day). The superintendent of schools  
87 is also authorized to permit the school band and its director(s)  
88 at any public school in the district to perform at Armistice  
89 (Veterans' Day) exercises in the school district upon the request  
90 of public officials or veterans associations without loss of any



91 program credit by participating students and without loss of leave  
92 by participating school personnel.

93 (6) The month of April is declared to be "Mississippi Native  
94 Plant Month" to increase public awareness of Mississippi's native  
95 plants and the many benefits they provide to pollinators,  
96 Mississippi's economy, and the health of Mississippi's  
97 environment.

98 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
99 and after its passage.

