

By: Representative Scott

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 1450

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 DESIGNATE JUNE 19TH, JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY, AS A
3 LEGAL HOLIDAY IN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI; TO CLARIFY WHEN A LEGAL
4 HOLIDAY WILL BE CELEBRATED WHEN THE HOLIDAY FALLS ON A SATURDAY OR
5 SUNDAY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that June 19, 1865, known as
7 "Juneteenth," commemorates the true end to slavery in the United
8 States when Major General Gordon Granger traveled to Galveston,
9 Texas, and declared the joyous news of freedom from slavery, and
10 250,000 enslaved individuals in Texas finally learned that they
11 were free, nearly two years after the Emancipation Proclamation
12 was signed by President Abraham Lincoln; and

13 WHEREAS, Juneteenth is considered to be the longest-running
14 African-American holiday marking the end of slavery in the United
15 States, and it has been celebrated across the nation for over 150
16 years in commemoration of the last enslaved persons' freedom,
17 while emphasizing education and achievement, as well as
18 inclusiveness of all races and ethnic groups; and



19 WHEREAS, on June 15, 2021, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed
20 the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act to establish
21 Juneteenth as a federal holiday, and this unanimous vote included
22 "aye" votes from Senator Roger Wicker and Senator Cindy Hyde
23 Smith; and on June 16, 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives
24 passed the act with a vote of 415-14, with the "aye" votes
25 including those from Representative Bennie Thompson,
26 Representative Steven Palazzo, Representative Michael Guest and
27 Representative Trent Kelly; and

28 WHEREAS, on June 17, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. CST, Representative
29 Omeria Scott requested legislation to be drafted that designates
30 June 19th, Juneteenth National Independence Day, as an official,
31 legal state holiday in the State of Mississippi, five hours and
32 three minutes before President Joe Biden, the 46th President of
33 the United States, signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day
34 Act, making Juneteenth a federal holiday at 4:03 p.m. EST; and

35 WHEREAS, forty-seven states and the District of Columbia have
36 declared Juneteenth as a public holiday, honoring freedom,
37 recognizing life and uplifting the complex history and beautiful
38 culture of the African-American community; and

39 WHEREAS, legal holidays in the State of Mississippi are
40 purposefully few in number and recognize the most important
41 milestones in our nation's history, and Juneteenth is certainly
42 one of our nation's most important milestones, as it marks the



43 true end of slavery in the United States, and should be declared a
44 legal holiday in the State of Mississippi; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

48 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)
49 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,
50 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday
51 of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King,
52 Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February (Washington's
53 birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate Memorial Day);
54 the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis'
55 birthday); the nineteenth day of June (Juneteenth National
56 Independence Day); the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the
57 first Monday of September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of
58 November (Armistice or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by
59 proclamation by the Governor of Mississippi as a day of
60 Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to correspond to the date
61 proclaimed by the President of the United States (Thanksgiving
62 Day); and the twenty-fifth day of December (Christmas Day). * * *
63 If any holiday * * * falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then the next
64 following * * * Monday, or another day fixed by proclamation of
65 the Governor as the day to celebrate the holiday, shall be a legal
66 holiday.



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

74 (3) The following are not legal holidays for purposes of
75 this section, and the commemoration, recognition or observation of
76 these days does not authorize any state or local governmental
77 entity or political subdivision to consider, recognize or declare
78 such days as legal holidays:

79 (* * *a) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron
80 Presley Day in recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron
81 Presley's many contributions, international recognition and the
82 rich legacy left to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be
83 a day of recognition and observation and shall not be recognized
84 as a legal holiday.

85 (* * *b) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day
86 in recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto,
87 who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by
88 Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of
89 Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's
90 187-day journey from the Tombigbee River basin on our state's
91 eastern boundary, westward to the place of discovery of the



92 Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall be a day of
93 commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando de Soto and
94 European exploration and shall not be recognized as a legal
95 holiday.

96 (* * *4) Armistice Day (Veterans' Day) shall be observed by
97 appropriate exercises in all the public schools in the State of
98 Mississippi. The superintendent of schools of each public school
99 district is authorized to provide for the appearance of uniformed
100 military personnel, uniformed veterans or the families of fallen
101 military personnel/veterans at such public school exercises in
102 honor of Armistice (Veterans') Day. The superintendent of schools
103 is also authorized to permit the school band and its director(s)
104 at any public school in the district to perform at Armistice
105 (Veterans') Day exercises in the school district upon the request
106 of public officials or veterans associations without loss of any
107 program credit by participating students and without loss of leave
108 by participating school personnel.

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

