

By: Senator(s) McLendon

To: Public Health and
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2315

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-144-3, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
 2 TO ADD A BOARD-CERTIFIED EMERGENCY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN AS A MEMBER
 3 OF THE MISSISSIPPI RURAL PHYSICIANS SCHOLARSHIP COMMISSION; TO
 4 AMEND SECTION 37-144-5, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCLUDE THE
 5 MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EMERGENCY
 6 PHYSICIANS AMONG THE ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH THE COMMISSION SHALL
 7 SEEK INPUT REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI RURAL
 8 PHYSICIANS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM; TO AMEND SECTION 37-144-7,
 9 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCLUDE EMERGENCY MEDICINE STUDENTS
 10 IN THE MISSISSIPPI RURAL PHYSICIANS SCHOLARSHIP RESIDENCY PROGRAM;
 11 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-144-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
 14 amended as follows:

15 37-144-3. (1) The Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship
 16 Program shall be administered by a commission to be known as the
 17 "Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Commission." The
 18 commission shall be directed by a board composed of the following
 19 members:

20 (a) Two (2) generalist physicians appointed by and from
 21 the membership of the Mississippi State Medical Association, the



22 term of which shall be three (3) years and may be reappointed for
23 one (1) additional term;

24 (b) One (1) generalist physician appointed by and from
25 the membership of each of the following organizations, the term of
26 which shall be three (3) years and may be reappointed for one (1)
27 additional term:

28 (i) Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians;

29 (ii) Mississippi Chapter, American College of
30 Physicians;

31 (iii) Mississippi Chapter, American Academy of
32 Pediatrics;

33 (iv) Mississippi Chapter, American College of
34 OB-GYN;

35 (v) Mississippi Chapter, American College of
36 Emergency Physicians;

37 (* * *vi) Mississippi Medical and Surgical
38 Association;

39 (* * *vii) Mississippi Osteopathic Association;

40 (c) Two (2) designees of the Dean of the University of
41 Mississippi School of Medicine whose terms are at the discretion
42 of the dean, at least one (1) of whom is a member of the
43 University of Mississippi School of Medicine Admissions Committee;

44 (d) Two (2) medical students, one (1) of whom shall be
45 selected yearly through a process developed by the Dean of the
46 School of Medicine in consultation with the Chairs of the



47 Departments of Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, OB-GYN and
48 Pediatrics, and one (1) of whom shall be nominated for a one-year
49 term by the Mississippi Chapter of the Student National Medical
50 Association and approved by the Dean of the University of
51 Mississippi School of Medicine;

52 (e) A member of the Board of Trustees of State
53 Institutions of Higher Learning;

54 (f) The Chair of the Department of Family Medicine at
55 the University of Mississippi School of Medicine; and

56 (g) A licensed psychiatrist appointed by the
57 Mississippi Chapter of the American Psychiatric Association.

58 (2) The premedical advisors from the accredited four-year
59 colleges and universities in the state and the directors or
60 designees of the primary care generalist training programs in the
61 State of Mississippi shall comprise an advisory committee to the
62 commission to assist the commission in its administration of the
63 Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program.

64 (3) Vacancies on the commission must be filled in a manner
65 consistent with the original appointments.

66 (4) All appointments to the commission must be made no later
67 than September 1, * * * 2023. After the members are appointed,
68 the Chair of the Department of Family Medicine shall set a date
69 for the organizational meeting that is mutually acceptable to the
70 majority of the commission members. The organizational meeting
71 shall be for the purposes of organizing the commission and



72 establishing rules for transacting its business. A majority of
73 the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum at all
74 commission meetings. An affirmative vote of a majority of the
75 members present and voting shall be required in the adoption of
76 rules, reports and in any other actions taken by the commission.
77 At the organizational meeting, the commission shall elect a chair
78 and vice chair from the members appointed according to paragraphs
79 (a) through (d) of subsection (1). The chair shall serve for a
80 term of two (2) years, upon the expiration of which the vice chair
81 shall assume the office of chair.

82 (5) After the organizational meeting, the commission shall
83 hold no less than two (2) meetings annually.

84 (6) The commission may form an executive committee for the
85 purpose of transacting business that must be conducted before the
86 next regularly scheduled meeting of the commission. All actions
87 taken by the executive committee must be ratified by the
88 commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

89 (7) Members of the commission shall serve without
90 compensation but may be reimbursed, subject to the availability of
91 funding, for mileage and actual and necessary expenses incurred in
92 attending meetings of the commission.

93 (8) Funding for the establishment and continued operation of
94 the program and commission shall be appropriated out of any money
95 in the General Fund not already appropriated to the University of
96 Mississippi Medical Center.



97 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-144-5, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
98 amended as follows:

99 37-144-5. The Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship
100 Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

101 (a) Developing the administrative policy for the
102 commission and the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship
103 Program;

104 (b) Promulgating rules and regulations, with the advice
105 and consent of the University of Mississippi Medical Center,
106 pertaining to the implementation and operation of the Rural
107 Physicians Scholarship Program;

108 (c) Developing and implementing strategies and
109 activities for the identification and recruitment of students and
110 for marketing the program and for the implementation of the
111 program. In developing these strategies, the board shall seek the
112 input of various organizations and entities, including the
113 Mississippi State Medical Association, the Mississippi Academy of
114 Family Physicians, the Mississippi Chapters of the American
115 College of Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the
116 American College of OB-GYN, the American College of Emergency
117 Physicians, the Mississippi Medical and Surgical Association, the
118 Mississippi Osteopathic Medicine Association and the American
119 Psychiatric Association;

120 (d) Establishing a budget, with the advice and consent
121 of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, to support the



122 activities of the program and periodically reviewing and if
123 appropriate, revising, the scholarship and other stipends offered
124 through the program;

125 (e) Advising the University of Mississippi Medical
126 Center regarding hiring an executive director and support staff
127 necessary for the commission's work. The commission shall
128 nominate at least two (2) individuals to serve as executive
129 director;

130 (f) Reviewing participants' progress in the program and
131 mentoring students and physicians participating in the program;

132 (g) Developing and participating in programs that
133 provide initial practice support in collaboration with other
134 interested professional organizations;

135 (h) The commission shall have the authority through use
136 of generally applicable definitions, to designate an area of the
137 state as underserved or rural. The method by which these
138 designations shall be made shall be contained in rules and
139 regulations promulgated by the commission.

140 **SECTION 3.** Section 37-144-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
141 amended as follows:

142 37-144-7. (1) The commission shall develop and implement
143 policies and procedures designed to recruit, identify and enroll
144 undergraduate students who demonstrate necessary interest,
145 commitment, aptitude and academic achievement to pursue careers as
146 family physicians, emergency physicians or other generalist



147 physicians in rural or medically underserved areas of Mississippi,
148 and to develop and implement the programs designed to foster
149 successful entry of participants into medical school, completion
150 of medical school, enrollment into and completion of family
151 medicine or other generalist residency, and establishment and
152 maintenance of a career in family medicine, emergency medicine or
153 other generalist specialty in a rural or underserved area of
154 Mississippi.

155 (2) The commission shall have the authority through use of
156 generally applicable definitions to designate an area of the state
157 as underserved or rural.

158 (3) The commission, in conjunction with the University of
159 Mississippi Medical Center, shall have the authority to provide
160 students selected for scholarship funding with faculty mentors and
161 other programs designed to enhance the students' likelihood of
162 admission to the medical school. The commission and the
163 University of Mississippi Medical Center will develop coursework
164 that will provide scholarship students with the skills necessary
165 for sustained and successful medical practice in rural
166 Mississippi.

167 (4) Each applicant for admission to the program must submit
168 an application to the commission that conforms to requirements
169 established by the commission.

170 (5) In selecting participants for the program, the board may
171 only accept an applicant if his or her academic record and other



172 characteristics, if given consideration by the University of
173 Mississippi School of Medicine Admissions Committee, would be
174 considered credible and competitive.

175 (6) An applicant for the program may be admitted only upon a
176 majority vote of the members of the commission.

177 (7) Not less than fifteen (15) students will be admitted to
178 the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program each year,
179 provided that there are fifteen (15) or more qualified applicants
180 for the program.

181 (8) Upon the funding of * * * sixty-two (62) or more rural
182 physicians scholarships by the Legislature and recognizing the
183 importance of balancing the needs of comprehensive primary care
184 along with a critical shortage of psychiatrists in Mississippi,
185 the commission may grant an exception for fourth-year medical or
186 osteopathic school (M4) students who demonstrate a desire to
187 practice psychiatry in rural Mississippi and who use a practice
188 model and enter the practice of medicine in a rural or underserved
189 area in Mississippi, as defined by the commission, beginning for
190 the M4 Class of * * * 2023.

191 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
192 and after July 1, 2023.

