

By: Representative Massengill

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 696

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 DESIGNATE JUNE 12, WOMEN'S VETERANS' DAY, AS A LEGAL HOLIDAY IN
3 THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 WHEREAS, women have honorably and courageously served in all
6 of America's wars and conflicts since the American Revolution, but
7 their service went unrecognized; and

8 WHEREAS, the first Women's Veterans' Day was held June 12,
9 2018, marking the 70th anniversary of the Women's Armed Services
10 Integration Act, which was signed into law by President Harry S.
11 Truman on June 12, 1948, enabling women to serve as permanent,
12 regular members of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and the recently
13 formed Air Force; and

14 WHEREAS, during World War II, approximately 400,000 women
15 served in support positions with the military, and nearly 500 were
16 killed in enemy fire; and

17 WHEREAS, though women were officially recognized as military
18 members or veterans in 1948, they had been serving in the American



19 military since before the United States became a nation, often
20 serving in the civilian fields in positions such as nursing and
21 cooking; and

22 WHEREAS, women now make up about 20% of new recruits, 16% of
23 personnel serving on active duty, and 19% of the National Guard
24 and Reserve Forces; and

25 WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the
26 Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board remain committed to
27 providing over 200,000 Mississippi women veterans with exceptional
28 healthcare and services; and

29 WHEREAS, as members of the Legislature, we salute and
30 remember the women who courageously served our state and nation,
31 and we honor our female veterans and their families for their
32 outstanding service, sacrifice and remarkable dedication to our
33 nation; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

37 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)
38 of this section, the following are declared to be legal
39 holidays * * *: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the
40 third Monday of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin
41 Luther King, Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February
42 (Washington's birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate
43 Memorial Day); the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and



44 Jefferson Davis' birthday); the twelfth day of June (Women's
45 Veterans' Day); the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the
46 first Monday of September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of
47 November (Armistice or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by
48 proclamation by the Governor of Mississippi as a day of
49 Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to correspond to the date
50 proclaimed by the President of the United States (Thanksgiving
51 Day); and the twenty-fifth day of December (Christmas Day). In
52 the event any holiday hereinbefore declared legal shall fall on
53 Sunday, then the next following day shall be a legal holiday.

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

61 (3) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron Presley Day in
62 recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron Presley's many
63 contributions, international recognition and the rich legacy left
64 to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be a day of
65 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal
66 holiday.

67 (4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day in
68 recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto,



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

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

91 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
92 and after July 1, 2024.

