

By: Representative Scott

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 963

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

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

6 WHEREAS, the date of June 19 is known as "Juneteenth," and it  
7 is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of  
8 slavery in the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, the commemoration of June 19 as Juneteenth  
10 specifically refers to the fact that, even though President  
11 Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, the  
12 joyous news of freedom from slavery did not reach certain  
13 Americans in Galveston, Texas, until June 19, 1865; and

14 WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates freedom from slavery in  
15 America, emphasizes education and achievement and is a day for  
16 reflection and rejoicing in the African-American experience; and

17 WHEREAS, the celebration of Juneteenth is inclusive of all  
18 races, ethnicities, religions and nationalities, and citizens  
19 across our country may join hands in acknowledging a period in our



20 history that has influenced our society, a great society that  
21 advances the ideals of liberty and justice for all; NOW,  
22 THEREFORE,

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

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

26 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)  
27 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,  
28 viz:

29 (a) The first day of January, designated as New Year's  
30 Day;

31 (b) The third Monday of January, designated as both  
32 Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s  
33 birthday;

34 (c) The third Monday of February, designated as George  
35 Washington's birthday;

36 (d) The last Monday of April, designated as Confederate  
37 Memorial Day;

38 (e) The last Monday of May, designated as National  
39 Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis' birthday;

40 (f) The nineteenth day of June, designated as  
41 Juneteenth Freedom Day;

42 (g) The fourth day of July, designated as Independence  
43 Day;



44           (h) The first Monday of September, designated as Labor  
45 Day;

46           (i) The eleventh day of November, designated as  
47 Armistice or Veterans' Day;

48           (j) The day fixed by proclamation by the Governor of  
49 Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to  
50 correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the United  
51 States, designated as Thanksgiving Day; and

52           (k) The twenty-fifth day of December, designated as  
53 Christmas Day.

54           \* \* \* If any legal holiday \* \* \* falls on a Saturday or  
55 Sunday, then the next following \* \* \* Monday, or another day  
56 declared by proclamation of the Governor as the day to celebrate  
57 the holiday, shall be a legal holiday.

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

66           (3) August 16 is declared to be Elvis Aaron Presley Day in  
67 recognition and appreciation of Elvis Aaron Presley's many  
68 contributions, international recognition and the rich legacy left



69 to us by Elvis Aaron Presley. This day shall be a day of  
70 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal  
71 holiday.

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

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



94 loss of any program credit by participating students and without  
95 loss of leave by participating school personnel.

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

