

By: Senator(s) Hill

To: Elections

SENATE BILL NO. 2137

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 23-15-297, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO INCREASE THE QUALIFYING FEES FOR STATEWIDE AND LOCAL CANDIDATES
3 TO COVER THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PERFORMING BACKGROUND CHECKS;
4 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-15-297, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 23-15-297. (1) All candidates, upon entering the race for
9 party nominations for office, shall first pay to the proper
10 officer as provided for in Section 23-15-299 for each primary
11 election the following amounts:

12 (a) Candidates for Governor, the amount determined by
13 the state executive committee of the party pursuant to subsection
14 (2) of this section but no less than One Thousand Dollars
15 (\$1,000.00) and no more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00).

16 (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney
17 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public
18 Accounts, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture
19 and Commerce, State Highway Commissioner and State Public Service



20 Commissioner, the amount determined by the state executive
21 committee of the party pursuant to subsection (2) of this section
22 but no less than Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) and no more than
23 Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00).

24 (c) Candidates for State Senator and State
25 Representative, Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00).

26 (d) Candidates for district attorney, Two Hundred Fifty
27 Dollars (\$250.00).

28 (e) Candidates for sheriff, chancery clerk, circuit
29 clerk, tax assessor, tax collector, county attorney, county
30 superintendent of education and board of supervisors, One Hundred
31 Dollars (\$100.00).

32 (f) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,
33 justice court judge and constable, One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

34 (g) Candidates for United States Senator, the amount
35 determined by the state executive committee of the party pursuant
36 to subsection (2) of this section but no less than One Thousand
37 Dollars (\$1,000.00) and no more than Five Thousand Dollars
38 (\$5,000.00).

39 (h) Candidates for United States Representative, the
40 amount determined by the state executive committee of the party
41 pursuant to subsection (2) of this section but no less than Five
42 Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) and no more than Two Thousand Five
43 Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00).



44 (i) In addition to the fees that party-nominated
45 candidates must pay to enter the race for statewide and local
46 elections, each candidate must also pay the applicable cost and
47 fees incurred in requesting and obtaining state and national
48 criminal history record information on the candidate.

49 (2) (a) The state executive committee of a political party
50 shall set the entry fee that a candidate is to pay upon entering
51 the race for party nominations for the offices listed in
52 paragraphs (a), (b), (g) and (h) of subsection (1) of this section
53 and Section 23-15-1093(2) (a). The authority granted under this
54 subsection shall not be exercised by any state executive committee
55 of a political party for any individual office more than once
56 every two (2) years, beginning July 1, 2022.

57 (b) Each state executive committee of a political party
58 shall report the entry fee determined for each office to the
59 Secretary of State by October 1 of the year before the election is
60 held for that office. If a state executive committee does not
61 meet the deadline in this paragraph for any office, the minimum
62 entry fee shall be assessed for the office in that party's primary
63 election during that election cycle.

64 (3) All independent candidates and special election
65 candidates entering the race for office shall pay to the proper
66 officer as provided for in Section 23-15-299 the following
67 amounts:



68 (a) Candidates for Governor, One Thousand Dollars
69 (\$1,000.00).

70 (b) Candidates for Lieutenant Governor, Attorney
71 General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Auditor of Public
72 Accounts, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Agriculture
73 and Commerce, State Highway Commissioner and State Public Service
74 Commissioner, Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00).

75 (c) Candidates for district attorney, State Senator and
76 State Representative, Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00).

77 (d) Candidates for sheriff, chancery clerk, circuit
78 clerk, tax assessor, tax collector, county attorney, county
79 superintendent of education and board of supervisors, One Hundred
80 Dollars (\$100.00).

81 (e) Candidates for county surveyor, county coroner,
82 justice court judge and constable, One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

83 (f) Candidates for United States Senator, One Thousand
84 Dollars (\$1,000.00).

85 (g) Candidates for United States Representative, Five
86 Hundred Dollars (\$500.00).

87 (h) In addition to the fees that independent candidates
88 must pay to enter the race for statewide and local elections, each
89 candidate must also pay the applicable cost and fees incurred in
90 requesting and obtaining state and national criminal history
91 record information on the candidate.



92 (4) The Secretary of State shall publish the fees listed in
93 this section and Section 23-15-1093 no later than forty-five (45)
94 days before the qualifying period begins for each office.

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

