

By: Senator(s) Hill

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and  
Parks; Government Structure

SENATE BILL NO. 2290

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-4-4, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
 2 PROVIDE THAT NO MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES  
 3 AND PARKS MAY SERVE MORE THAN TWO CONSECUTIVE FIVE-YEAR TERMS; TO  
 4 REQUIRE THAT, AT ALL TIMES, THE COMMISSION HAVE AT LEAST TWO  
 5 MEMBERS MEETING CERTAIN EDUCATION OR EXPERIENCE QUALIFICATIONS; TO  
 6 INCREASE, FROM FIVE TO TEN YEARS, THE TIME PERIOD PRECEDING  
 7 APPOINTMENT DURING WHICH A COMMISSIONER MAY NOT HAVE A RECORD OF  
 8 CONVICTION OF VIOLATION OF FISH OR GAME LAWS AND REGULATIONS, OR A  
 9 RECORD OF ANY FELONY CONVICTION; TO ADD THAT, DURING THIS TIME  
 10 PERIOD, A COMMISSIONER ALSO MAY NOT HAVE A RECORD OF MORE THAN ONE  
 11 CITATION FOR A VIOLATION OF FISH OR GAME LAWS; AND FOR RELATED  
 12 PURPOSES.

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

14 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-4-4, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
 15 amended as follows:

16 49-4-4. (1) There is hereby created the Mississippi  
 17 Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, to be composed of  
 18 five (5) persons appointed by the Governor, with the advice and  
 19 consent of the Senate, for a term of five (5) years. One (1)  
 20 person shall be appointed from each congressional district. The  
 21 initial terms of the members shall be one (1), two (2), three (3),  
 22 four (4) and five (5) years, respectively. Thereafter, all terms  
 23 shall be for five (5) years. An appointment to fill a vacancy



24 which arises for reasons other than by expiration of a term of  
25 office shall be made from the respective congressional district  
26 for the unexpired term only. No member may serve more than two  
27 (2) consecutive five-year terms on the commission.

28 (2) The commission shall elect from its membership a  
29 chairman who shall preside over meetings and a vice chairman who  
30 shall preside in the absence of the chairman or when the chairman  
31 shall be excused.

32 (3) The commission shall adopt rules and regulations  
33 governing times and places for meetings and governing the manner  
34 of conducting its business. Each member of the commission shall  
35 take the oath prescribed by Section 268 of the Mississippi  
36 Constitution, and shall enter into bond in the amount of Thirty  
37 Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) to be approved by the Secretary of  
38 State, conditioned according to law, and payable to the State of  
39 Mississippi before assuming the duties of office. Any member who  
40 shall not attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the  
41 commission shall be subject to removal by a majority vote of the  
42 commission members.

43 (4) The members of the commission shall receive no annual  
44 salary but shall receive per diem compensation as authorized by  
45 law for each day devoted to the discharge of official duties and  
46 shall be entitled to reimbursement for all actual and necessary  
47 expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties, including  
48 mileage as authorized by law.



49       (5) The commission shall be composed of persons with a  
50 demonstrated history of involvement in at least one (1) of the  
51 matters of jurisdiction of the commission and whose employment and  
52 activities are not in conflict. Beginning upon the filling of the  
53 second term to expire on or after July 1, 2024, the commission at  
54 all times shall have at least two (2) members meeting at least one  
55 (1) of the following qualifications: either holding a bachelor of  
56 science degree in wildlife biology, wildlife conservation,  
57 wildlife research, wildlife management or a related life science,  
58 or having at least ten (10) years' experience working with a  
59 company specializing in wildlife biology, wildlife conservation,  
60 wildlife research or wildlife management. \* \* \* Each of the five  
61 (5) commissioners shall be an active outdoorsman holding a  
62 resident hunting or fishing license \* \* \* for at least \* \* \* ten  
63 (10) years preceding appointment. A member shall not have a  
64 record of conviction of violation of fish or game laws and  
65 regulations within \* \* \* ten (10) years preceding appointment or a  
66 record of any felony conviction, or a record of more than one (1)  
67 citation for a violation of fish or game laws within the ten (10)  
68 years preceding appointment.

69       ( \* \* \*6) The commission shall have the power to adopt,  
70 amend and repeal such regulations and rules as may be necessary  
71 for the operation of the department.



72 ( \* \* \*7) The commission shall have the power and authority  
73 to issue all licenses and permits under the jurisdiction of the  
74 department.

75 ( \* \* \*8) In the furtherance of its duties and  
76 responsibilities, the commission may conduct hearings, gather  
77 testimony and perform other functions required to carry out its  
78 powers and duties as prescribed by statute.

79 ( \* \* \*9) The commission shall have all power for  
80 conserving, managing and developing wildlife and fishery resources  
81 in accordance with sound scientific principles, and in  
82 collaboration with the agency staff of the department, except for  
83 saltwater aquatic life and marine resources under the jurisdiction  
84 of the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources.

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

