

By: Representative Scoggins

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 97

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS TO PERMIT THE BOY
2 SCOUTS OF AMERICA AND THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF
3 AMERICA TO SPEAK WITH STUDENTS ABOUT CIVIC INVOLVEMENT AND THEIR
4 PARTICIPATION; TO PROVIDE A PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF REQUESTS TO
5 SPEAK WITH STUDENTS; TO REQUIRE PARENTS TO BE NOTIFIED OF SUCH
6 PRESENTATIONS BY THE BOY SCOUTS OR GIRL SCOUTS; TO REQUIRE PUBLIC
7 SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE SPECIFIED INFORMATION TO CERTAIN PARENTS OR
8 STUDENTS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER SAFETY EDUCATION COURSES AND
9 SWIMMING LESSONS; TO REQUIRE THE INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED
10 ELECTRONICALLY OR IN HARD COPY AND INCLUDE LOCAL OPTIONS FOR
11 AGE-APPROPRIATE WATER SAFETY COURSES AND SWIMMING LESSONS THAT
12 RESULT IN CERTIFICATION INDICATING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION; TO
13 DEFINE THE TERM "WATER SAFETY"; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 SECTION 1. (1) Representatives of the Boy Scouts of America
16 and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America shall be
17 allowed the opportunity to speak with students at public schools
18 and charter schools in the State of Mississippi about the civic
19 involvement of the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts, and to explain
20 how students may participate or join the Boy Scouts or the Girl
21 Scouts.

22 (2) Before addressing the student body of a public school or
23 charter school, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts shall submit a



24 written request to the principal of the school to speak to the
25 students enrolled therein. The principal shall provide written
26 approval to the requesting Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts
27 representative of the manner, date and time for the Boy Scouts or
28 Girl Scouts, or both, to speak with the students. Additionally,
29 the principal shall inform parents of the presentation at least
30 three (3) days before its scheduled occurrence, and shall include
31 the manner by which students will be addressed, as well as the
32 date and time of the presentation.

33 **SECTION 2.** (1) For the purposes of this section, the term
34 "water safety" means age-appropriate education intended to promote
35 safety in, on, and around bodies of water and reduce the risk of
36 injury or drowning.

37 (2) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, each public
38 school shall provide, to a parent who initially enrolls his or her
39 child in the school, information on the important role water
40 safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving
41 lives. The information must be provided electronically or in hard
42 copy and must include local options for age-appropriate water
43 safety courses and swimming lessons that result in a certificate
44 indicating successful completion, including courses and lessons
45 offered for free or at a reduced price. If the student is
46 eighteen (18) years of age or older, or is under the age of
47 twenty-one (21) and is enrolling in adult education classes, the
48 information must be provided to the student.



49 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
50 and after July 1, 2025.

