

By: Representative Clark

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 434

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 DESIGNATE JUNE 19 AS "JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY"; TO SPECIFICALLY
3 PROVIDE THAT JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY SHALL NOT BE A LEGAL HOLIDAY,
4 BUT SHALL BE A DAY TO COMMEMORATE FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY AT NO
5 EXPENSE TO THE STATE; TO PROVIDE WHEN A LEGAL HOLIDAY WILL BE
6 CELEBRATED IF THE HOLIDAY FALLS ON A SATURDAY OR SUNDAY; AND FOR
7 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

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

19 WHEREAS, the celebration of Juneteenth is inclusive of all
20 races, ethnicities, religions and nationalities, and citizens



21 across our country may join hands in acknowledging a period in our
22 history that has influenced our society, a great society that
23 advances the ideals of liberty and justice for all; NOW,
24 THEREFORE,

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

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

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

31 (a) The first day of January (New Year's Day);

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

34 (c) The third Monday of February (Washington's
35 birthday);

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

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

40 (f) The fourth day of July (Independence Day);

41 (g) The first Monday of September (Labor Day);

42 (h) The eleventh day of November (Armistice or
43 Veterans' Day);

44 (i) The day fixed by proclamation by the Governor of
45 Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to



correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the United States (Thanksgiving Day); and

(j) The twenty-fifth day of December (Christmas Day).

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

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

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

(4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day in recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto, who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of



Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's 187-day journey from the Tombigbee River basin on our state's eastern boundary, westward to the place of discovery of the Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall be a day of commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando de Soto and European exploration and shall not be recognized as a legal holiday.

(5) June 19 is declared to be Juneteenth Freedom Day in recognition and commemoration of June 19, 1865, as the date former slaves of African descent received communication that slavery had ended in America, and as a day when the ideals of liberty and justice for all citizens is celebrated. This day shall be a day of commemoration, recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal holiday.

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



96 loss of any program credit by participating students and without
97 loss of leave by participating school personnel.

98 (* * *7) The month of March is declared to be "Mississippi
99 Musicians Month" to recognize and celebrate the state's rich
100 musical heritage and to encourage the world to join Mississippi in
101 honoring our musicians and their contributions.

102 (* * *8) In recognition of the service, courage and
103 sacrifice of the valiant service members of the Tuskegee Airmen
104 who served during World War II, the fourth Thursday of March is
105 designated as Tuskegee Airmen Day in Mississippi. This should be
106 a day of recognition and observation and shall not be recognized
107 as a legal holiday.

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

