

By: Representative Scott

To: Rules

## HOUSE BILL NO. 471

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 DESIGNATE JUNE 19 AS JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY; AND FOR RELATED  
3 PURPOSES.

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

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

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

15 WHEREAS, the celebration of Juneteenth is inclusive of all  
16 races, ethnicities, religions and nationalities, and citizens  
17 across our country may join hands in acknowledging a period in our  
18 history that has influenced our society, a great society that



19 advances the ideals of liberty and justice for all; NOW,  
20 THEREFORE,

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

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

24 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)  
25 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,  
26 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday  
27 of January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Dr. Martin Luther King,  
28 Jr.'s birthday); the third Monday of February (Washington's  
29 birthday); the last Monday of April (Confederate Memorial Day);  
30 the last Monday of May (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis'  
31 birthday); the nineteenth day of June (Juneteenth Freedom Day);  
32 the fourth day of July (Independence Day); the first Monday of  
33 September (Labor Day); the eleventh day of November (Armistice or  
34 Veterans' Day); the day fixed by proclamation by the Governor of  
35 Mississippi as a day of Thanksgiving, which shall be fixed to  
36 correspond to the date proclaimed by the President of the United  
37 States (Thanksgiving Day); and the twenty-fifth day of December  
38 (Christmas Day). In the event any holiday hereinbefore declared  
39 legal shall fall on Sunday, then the next following day shall be a  
40 legal holiday.

41 (2) In lieu of any one (1) legal holiday provided for in  
42 subsection (1) of this section, with the exception of the third  
43 Monday in January (Robert E. Lee's birthday and Martin Luther



King, Jr.'s birthday) and the eleventh day of November (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) Armistice Day (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



69 district is authorized to provide for the appearance of uniformed  
70 military personnel, uniformed veterans or the families of fallen  
71 military personnel/veterans at such public school exercises in  
72 honor of Armistice (Veterans') Day. The superintendent of schools  
73 is also authorized to permit the school band and its director(s)  
74 at any public school in the district to perform at Armistice  
75 (Veterans') Day exercises in the school district upon the request  
76 of public officials or veterans associations without loss of any  
77 program credit by participating students and without loss of leave  
78 by participating school personnel.

79 (6) The month of March is declared to be "Mississippi  
80 Musicians Month" to recognize and celebrate the state's rich  
81 musical heritage and to encourage the world to join Mississippi in  
82 honoring our musicians and their contributions.

83 (7) In recognition of the service, courage and sacrifice of  
84 the valiant service members of the Tuskegee Airmen who served  
85 during World War II, the fourth Thursday of March is designated as  
86 Tuskegee Airmen Day in Mississippi. This should be a day of  
87 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal  
88 holiday.

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

