

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



44 King, Jr.'s birthday) and the eleventh day of November (Armistice
45 or Veterans' Day), the governing authorities of any municipality
46 or county may declare, by order spread upon its minutes, Mardi
47 Gras Day or any one (1) other day during the year, to be a legal
48 holiday.

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

55 (4) May 8 is declared to be Hernando de Soto Day in
56 recognition, observation and commemoration of Hernando de Soto,
57 who led the first and most imposing expedition ever made by
58 Europeans into the wilds of North America and the State of
59 Mississippi, and in further recognition of the Spanish explorer's
60 187-day journey from the Tombigbee River basin on our state's
61 eastern boundary, westward to the place of discovery of the
62 Mississippi River on May 8, 1541. This day shall be a day of
63 commemoration, recognition and observation of Hernando de Soto and
64 European exploration and shall not be recognized as a legal
65 holiday.

66 (5) Armistice Day (Veterans' Day) shall be observed by
67 appropriate exercises in all the public schools in the State of
68 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.

