

By: Representatives Karriem, Blackmon

To: Rules

HOUSE BILL NO. 704

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 3-3-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 EXCLUSIVELY RECOGNIZE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S BIRTHDAY ON
3 THE THIRD MONDAY OF JANUARY; TO REMOVE ROBERT E. LEE'S BIRTHDAY AS
4 A LEGAL STATE HOLIDAY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

5 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature desires to reflect the
6 transformative power of Mississippi from its past to its present
7 by celebrating holidays that wholly reflect the remarkable strides
8 made by all citizens; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

12 3-3-7. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2)
13 of this section, the following are declared to be legal holidays,
14 viz: the first day of January (New Year's Day); the third Monday
15 of January (* * * Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday); the
16 third Monday of February (Washington's birthday); the last Monday
17 of April (Confederate Memorial Day); the last Monday of May
18 (National Memorial Day and Jefferson Davis' birthday); the fourth
19 day of July (Independence Day); the first Monday of September



(Labor Day); the eleventh day of November (Armistice or Veterans' Day); the day fixed by proclamation by the Governor of 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 the twenty-fifth day of December (Christmas Day). * * * If any legal holiday * * * falls on a Sunday, then the next following day 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 (* * * 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 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 (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 (Veterans') Day exercises in the school district upon the request of public officials or veterans associations without loss of any program credit by participating students and without loss of leave by participating school personnel.

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

(7) In recognition of the service, courage and sacrifice of the valiant service members of the Tuskegee Airmen who served



70 during World War II, the fourth Thursday of March is designated as
71 Tuskegee Airmen Day in Mississippi. This should be a day of
72 recognition and observation and shall not be recognized as a legal
73 holiday.

74 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
75 and after July 1, 2025.

