

By: Representative Crawford

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 791

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO INSTALL VIDEO
 2 SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS EQUIPPED WITH AUDIO RECEPTION TECHNOLOGY IN
 3 CERTAIN AREAS OF SCHOOLS FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF
 4 EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS; TO LIMIT VIEWING ACCESS OF RECORDED
 5 SURVEILLANCE TO CERTAIN DISTRICT AND INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL-FACILITY
 6 LICENSED PERSONNEL; TO REQUIRE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROTECT THE
 7 PRIVACY AND IDENTITY OF STUDENTS CAPTURED IN THE SURVEILLANCE WHO
 8 ARE NOT THE SUBJECT OF INCIDENTS GIVING RISE TO AN INVESTIGATION
 9 OR LITIGATION; TO AUTHORIZE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO CONTRACT WITH
 10 ANY COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL, INDEPENDENT OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO
 11 PROVIDE SURVEILLANCE MONITORING; TO REQUIRE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT,
 12 ACTING THROUGH THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD, TO EMPLOY CERTAIN
 13 PROCEDURES PRIOR TO AWARDING THE CONTRACT FOR MONITORING SERVICES;
 14 TO ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO EMPLOY SECURITY
 15 PERSONNEL OR REQUIRE THE IMMEDIATE PRESENCE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
 16 OFFICERS ON SCHOOL PREMISES EQUIPPED WITH SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS; TO
 17 BRING FORWARD SECTION 37-3-83, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH
 18 ESTABLISHES A SCHOOL SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM, FOR PURPOSES OF
 19 POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

21 **SECTION 1.** (1) Each school district shall install video
 22 surveillance cameras equipped with audio reception technology into
 23 each self-contained classroom of school facilities which provides
 24 daily instruction to an exceptional child, as defined in Section
 25 37-23-3, as well as in the gymnasium, interior corridors,
 26 cafeteria, designated recreational activity areas and on the



27 exterior parameters of the school facility. Each point of access
28 that allows for the entry and exit of individuals also must be
29 under video surveillance.

30 (2) The surveillance footage and audio may be viewed only by
31 the district superintendent and by the principal and licensed
32 personnel in the school building where the equipment is installed.
33 In the event of an incident involving an exceptional child which
34 warrants the disclosure of the video surveillance for
35 investigation or litigation purposes, the district shall undertake
36 every measure to protect the privacy and identity of any student
37 not involved in the incident giving rise to the investigation or
38 litigation for which the surveillance is being sought.

39 (3) The school district may contract with any company or
40 individual, independent of the school district, to provide the
41 necessary surveillance monitoring service. However, the school
42 district, acting through the school board, may not select any one
43 (1) company or individual without first advertising a request for
44 proposals in a newspaper published in the county in which the
45 school district is located or, if no newspaper is published in
46 that county, then in a newspaper having a general circulation in
47 that county, for two (2) successive weeks, the first being at
48 least ten (10) days before the public contract. The contract must
49 then be awarded to the best bid received and accepted by the
50 board.



51 (4) With the installation of surveillance cameras on school
52 premises as required under subsection (1) of this section, it is
53 not necessary for the school district to employ security personnel
54 or require the immediate presence of law enforcement officers on a
55 daily basis.

56 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-3-83, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
57 brought forward as follows:

58 37-3-83. (1) There is established within the State
59 Department of Education, using only existing staff and resources,
60 a School Safety Grant Program, available to all eligible public
61 school districts, to assist in financing programs to provide
62 school safety. However, no monies from the Temporary Assistance
63 for Needy Families grant may be used for the School Safety Grant
64 Program.

65 (2) The school board of each school district, with the
66 assistance of the State Department of Education School Safety
67 Center, shall adopt a comprehensive local school district school
68 safety plan and shall update the plan on an annual basis.

69 (3) Subject to the extent of appropriations available, the
70 School Safety Grant Program shall offer any of the following
71 specific preventive services, and other additional services
72 appropriate to the most current school district school safety
73 plan:

74 (a) Metal detectors;



75 (b) Video surveillance cameras, communications
76 equipment and monitoring equipment for classrooms, school
77 buildings, school grounds and school buses;

78 (c) Crisis management/action teams responding to school
79 violence;

80 (d) Violence prevention training, conflict resolution
81 training, behavioral stress training and other appropriate
82 training designated by the State Department of Education for
83 faculty and staff; and

84 (e) School safety personnel.

85 (4) Each local school district of this state may annually
86 apply for school safety grant funds subject to appropriations by
87 the Legislature. School safety grants shall include a base grant
88 amount plus an additional amount per student in net enrollment in
89 the school or school district. The base grant amount and amount
90 per student shall be determined by the State Board of Education,
91 subject to specific appropriation therefor by the Legislature. In
92 order to be eligible for such program, each local school board
93 desiring to participate shall apply to the State Department of
94 Education by May 31 before the beginning of the applicable fiscal
95 year on forms provided by the department, and shall be required to
96 establish a local School Safety Task Force to involve members of
97 the community in the school safety effort. The State Department
98 of Education shall determine by July 1 of each succeeding year



99 which local school districts have submitted approved applications
100 for school safety grants.

101 (5) As part of the School Safety Grant Program, the State
102 Department of Education may conduct a pilot program to research
103 the feasibility of using video camera equipment in the classroom
104 to address the following:

105 (a) Determine if video cameras in the classroom reduce
106 student disciplinary problems;

107 (b) Enable teachers to present clear and convincing
108 evidence of a student's disruptive behavior to the student, the
109 principal, the superintendent and the student's parents; and

110 (c) Enable teachers to review teaching performance and
111 receive diagnostic feedback for developmental purposes.

112 (6) Any local school district may use
113 audio/visual-monitoring equipment in classrooms, hallways,
114 buildings, grounds and buses for the purpose of monitoring school
115 disciplinary problems.

116 (7) As a component of the comprehensive local school
117 district school safety plan required under subsection (2) of this
118 section, the school board of a school district may adopt and
119 implement a policy addressing sexual abuse of children, to be
120 known as "Erin's Law Awareness." Any policy adopted under this
121 subsection may include or address, but need not be limited to, the
122 following:



123 (a) Methods for increasing teacher, student and
124 parental awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children,
125 including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a
126 child may be a victim of sexual abuse;

127 (b) Educational information for parents or guardians,
128 which may be included in the school handbook, on the warning signs
129 of a child being abused, along with any needed assistance,
130 referral or resource information;

131 (c) Training for school personnel on child sexual
132 abuse;

133 (d) Age-appropriate curriculum for students in
134 prekindergarten through fifth grade;

135 (e) Actions that a child who is a victim of sexual
136 abuse should take to obtain assistance and intervention;

137 (f) Counseling and resources available for students
138 affected by sexual abuse; and

139 (g) Emotional and educational support for a child who
140 has been abused to enable the child to be successful in school.

141 (8) As part of the school safety grant program, the State
142 Department of Education shall establish three (3) pilot programs
143 in six (6) school districts utilizing an evidence-based curriculum
144 to provide students in Grades K-5 with skills to manage stress and
145 anxiety in order for them to be better equipped to handle
146 challenges in a healthy way and build resiliency. The Mississippi
147 Department of Mental Health shall be responsible for the selection



148 of the content of the evidence-based curriculum. The results of
149 this pilot program shall be measured and reported, and such
150 results shall be used in consideration of the implementation of
151 this curriculum statewide.

152 (9) As a component of the comprehensive local school
153 district safety plan required under subsection (2) of this
154 section, beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the State
155 Department of Education shall require local school districts to
156 conduct, every two (2) years, refresher training on mental health
157 and suicide prevention for all school employees and personnel,
158 including all cafeteria workers, custodians, teachers and
159 administrators. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health shall
160 be responsible for the development and/or selection of the content
161 of the training, which training shall be provided at no cost to
162 school employees. School districts shall report completion of the
163 training to the State Department of Education.

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

