

By: Senator(s) Norwood

To: Elections

SENATE BILL NO. 2647

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 23-15-359, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF A POST OFFICE BOX NUMBER AS A QUALIFYING  
3 ADDRESS FOR A CANDIDATE FILING TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE AND TO  
4 REQUIRE THE CANDIDATE TO PROVIDE A PHYSICAL ADDRESS FOR HIS OR HER  
5 PLACE OF RESIDENCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-15-359, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
8 amended as follows:

9 23-15-359. (1) Except as provided in this section, the  
10 ballot shall contain the names of all party nominees certified by  
11 the appropriate executive committee, and independent and special  
12 election candidates who have timely filed petitions containing the  
13 required signatures and assessments that must be paid pursuant to  
14 Section 23-15-297, if the candidates and nominees meet all of the  
15 qualifications to hold the office sought. A petition requesting  
16 that an independent or special election candidate's name be placed  
17 on the ballot for any office shall be filed as provided for in  
18 subsection (3) or (4) of this section, as appropriate, and shall



19 be signed by not less than the following number of qualified  
20 electors:

21 (a) For an office elected by the state at large, not  
22 less than one thousand (1,000) qualified electors.

23 (b) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
24 a Supreme Court district, not less than three hundred (300)  
25 qualified electors.

26 (c) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
27 a congressional district, not less than two hundred (200)  
28 qualified electors.

29 (d) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
30 a circuit or chancery court district, not less than one hundred  
31 (100) qualified electors.

32 (e) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
33 a senatorial or representative district, not less than fifty (50)  
34 qualified electors.

35 (f) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
36 a county, not less than fifty (50) qualified electors.

37 (g) For an office elected by the qualified electors of  
38 a supervisors district, not less than fifteen (15) qualified  
39 electors.

40 (h) For the Office of President of the United States, a  
41 party nominee or independent candidate shall pay an assessment in  
42 the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00).



43           (2)   (a) Unless the petition or fee, whichever is  
44   applicable, required above shall be filed as provided for in  
45   subsection (3), (4) or (5) of this section, as appropriate, the  
46   name of the person requested to be a candidate, unless nominated  
47   by a political party, shall not be placed upon the ballot. The  
48   ballot shall contain the names of each candidate for each office,  
49   and the names shall be listed under the name of the political  
50   party that candidate represents, when applicable, and as provided  
51   by law and as certified to the circuit clerk by the state  
52   executive committee of the political party. In the event the  
53   candidate qualifies as an independent as provided in this section,  
54   he or she shall be listed on the ballot as an independent  
55   candidate.

56           (b) The name of an independent or special election  
57   candidate who dies before the printing of the ballots, shall not  
58   be placed on the ballots.

59           (3) Petitions for offices described in paragraphs (a), (b),  
60   (c), (d) and (e) of subsection (1) of this section shall be filed  
61   with the Secretary of State by no later than 5:00 p.m. on the same  
62   date or business day, as applicable, by which candidates are  
63   required to pay the fee provided for in Section 23-15-297;  
64   however, no petition may be filed before January 1 of the year in  
65   which the election for the office is held.

66           (4) Petitions for offices described in paragraphs (f) and  
67   (g) of subsection (1) of this section shall be filed with the



proper circuit clerk by no later than 5:00 p.m. on the same date by which candidates are required to pay the fee provided for in Section 23-15-297; however, no petition may be filed before January 1 of the year in which the election for the office is held. The circuit clerk shall notify the county election commissioners of all persons who have filed petitions with the clerk. The notification shall occur within two (2) business days and shall contain all necessary information.

(5) The assessment for the office described in paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of this section shall be paid to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall deposit any qualifying fees received from candidates into the Elections Support Fund established in Section 23-15-5.

(6) The election commissioners may also have printed upon the ballot any local issue election matter that is authorized to be held on the same date as the regular or general election pursuant to Section 23-15-375; however, the ballot form of the local issue must be filed with the election commissioners by the appropriate governing authority not less than sixty (60) days before the date of the election.

(7) The provisions of this section shall not apply to municipal elections or to the election of the offices of justice of the Supreme Court, judge of the Court of Appeals, circuit judge, chancellor, county court judge, justice court judge and family court judge.



93           (8) Nothing in this section shall prohibit special elections  
94 to fill vacancies in either house of the Legislature from being  
95 held as provided in Section 23-15-851. In all elections conducted  
96 under the provisions of Section 23-15-851, there shall be printed  
97 on the ballot the name of any candidate who, not having been  
98 nominated by a political party, shall have been requested to be a  
99 candidate for any office by a petition filed with the Secretary of  
100 State and signed by not less than fifty (50) qualified electors.

101           (9) (a) The appropriate election commission shall determine  
102 whether each candidate is a qualified elector of the state, state  
103 district, county or county district \* \* \* he or she seeks to  
104 serve, and whether each candidate meets all other qualifications  
105 to hold the office he or she is seeking or presents absolute proof  
106 that he or she will, subject to no contingencies, meet all  
107 qualifications on or before the date of the general or special  
108 election at which he or she could be elected to office. The  
109 election commission shall require that any candidate for public  
110 office shall supply the physical address of his or her place of  
111 residence and not a post office box number. The election  
112 commission shall determine whether the candidate has taken the  
113 steps necessary to qualify for more than one (1) office at the  
114 election. The election commission also shall determine whether  
115 any candidate has been convicted (i) of any felony in a court of  
116 this state, (ii) on or after December 8, 1992, of any offense in  
117 another state, which is a felony under the laws of this state,



118 (iii) of any felony in a federal court on or after December 8,  
119 1992, or (iv) of any offense that involved the misuse or abuse of  
120 his or her office or money coming into his or her hands by virtue  
121 of the office. Excepted from the above are convictions of  
122 manslaughter and violations of the United States Internal Revenue  
123 Code or any violations of the tax laws of this state.

124 (b) If the appropriate election commission finds that a  
125 candidate either (i) is not a qualified elector, (ii) does not  
126 meet all qualifications to hold the office he or she seeks and  
127 fails to provide absolute proof, subject to no contingencies, that  
128 he or she will meet the qualifications on or before the date of  
129 the general or special election at which he or she could be  
130 elected, or (iii) has been convicted of a felony or other  
131 disqualifying offense as described in paragraph (a) of this  
132 subsection, and not pardoned, then the election commission shall  
133 notify the candidate and give the candidate an opportunity to be  
134 heard. The election commission shall mail notice to the candidate  
135 at least three (3) business days before the hearing to the address  
136 provided by the candidate on the qualifying forms, and the  
137 committee shall attempt to contact the candidate by telephone,  
138 email and facsimile if the candidate provided this information on  
139 the forms. If the candidate fails to appear at the hearing or to  
140 prove that he or she meets all qualifications to hold the office  
141 subject to no contingencies, then the name of such candidate shall  
142 not be placed upon the ballot. If the appropriate election



commission determines that the candidate has taken the steps necessary to qualify for more than one (1) office at the election, the action required by Section 23-15-905, shall be taken.

(10) If after the deadline to qualify as a candidate for an office or after the time for holding any party primary for an office, only one (1) person has duly qualified to be a candidate for the office in the general election, the name of that person shall be placed on the ballot; provided, however, that if not more than one (1) person duly qualified to be a candidate for each office on the general election ballot, the election for all offices on the ballot shall be dispensed with and the appropriate election commission shall declare each candidate elected without opposition if the candidate meets all the qualifications to hold the office as determined pursuant to a review by the election commission in accordance with the provisions of subsection (9) of this section and if the candidate has filed all required campaign finance disclosure reports as required by Section 23-15-807.

(11) The petition required by this section may not be filed by using the internet.

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

