

By: Senator(s) Tollison (By Request)

To: Public Health and  
WelfareSENATE BILL NO. 2897  
(As Passed the Senate)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A SPECIAL FUND IN THE STATE TREASURY TO BE  
2 DESIGNATED AS THE "MISSISSIPPI REDUCING OUT-OF-WEDLOCK PREGNANCIES  
3 INCENTIVE GRANT FUND" FOR PROVIDING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO  
4 COUNTIES TO REDUCE THEIR OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTH RATES; TO PROVIDE  
5 THAT THE FUND SHALL BE ADMINISTERED BY THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT  
6 OF HUMAN SERVICES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 SECTION 1. (1) There is hereby created in the State  
9 Treasury a special fund to be known as the Mississippi Reducing  
10 Out-Of-Wedlock Pregnancies Incentive Grant Fund into which shall  
11 be deposited the federal funds available for grants for the  
12 reduction in out-of-wedlock births awarded under the federal  
13 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of  
14 1996 (Public Law 104-193) and such other money as the Legislature  
15 may provide by appropriation. The money in the fund shall be used  
16 for the purpose of providing financial incentives to counties to  
17 reduce their out-of-wedlock birth rates as required by federal  
18 welfare reform legislation. The fund shall be administered by the  
19 Department of Human Services. Unexpended amounts remaining in the  
20 fund at the end of the fiscal year shall not lapse into the State  
21 General Fund, and any interest earned on amounts in the fund shall  
22 be deposited to the credit of the fund; provided that any  
23 unexpended amounts remaining in the fund on June 30, 2003, shall  
24 lapse into the State General Fund.

25 (2) The Department of Human Services shall make annual  
26 awards from the fund to the top five (5) counties with the  
27 greatest reduction in out-of-wedlock births without an increase in  
28 abortions in each of the following categories:

29           (a) One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) in  
30 counties which had fewer than two hundred fifty (250) total live  
31 births;

32           (b) Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) in  
33 counties which had between two hundred fifty (250) and five  
34 hundred (500) total live births;

35           (c) Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000.00)  
36 in counties which had more than five hundred (500) total live  
37 births.

38           (3) Determination of the recipient counties will be based on  
39 an average of the previous two (2) years' out-of-wedlock birth  
40 rates compared to the previous two-year average, and abortion  
41 rates compared to the calendar year 1995 average as reported by  
42 the State Department of Health. In order to qualify for the award  
43 funds, the reduction in the out-of-wedlock birth rate shall be at  
44 least three percent (3%).

45           (4) In order to be considered for an incentive award, the  
46 county board of supervisors and/or the community action agency  
47 must submit a plan for the county to the Department of Human  
48 Services by October 1, 1999, and by October 1 of each subsequent  
49 year.

50           (5) Each county receiving an incentive award will be subject  
51 to the following requirements:

52           (a) The county must use the incentive award for some  
53 type of youth enrichment, including, but not limited to,  
54 continuing the implementation of the plan that reduced  
55 out-of-wedlock pregnancies, education-related projects,  
56 recreational facilities, or a summer work program; and

57           (b) The county must submit a report to the Department  
58 of Human Services on the methods used to achieve the reduction in  
59 out-of-wedlock births, and submit a separate report to the  
60 department explaining how the incentive award was spent.

61           (6) If the fund is not adequate to make the distributions

62 presented under this section, the department may award funds to  
63 counties on a reduced pro-rata basis.

64 (7) This section shall stand repealed from and after June  
65 30, 2003.

66 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
67 and after July 1, 1999.