

By: Representative Moody

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1246
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-143-6, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO EXPAND THE MEDICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO INCLUDE A
3 LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR FAMILY MEDICINE PHYSICIANS AGREEING TO
4 SERVE IN A PRIMARY CARE CRITICAL NEEDS SHORTAGE AREA, TO AUTHORIZE
5 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO
6 USE FUNDS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOLARSHIP AND LOAN REPAYMENT
7 PROGRAM TO SECURE FEDERAL MATCHING FUNDS TO ASSIST IN REPAYING
8 EDUCATIONAL LOANS FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CLINICIANS AGREEING TO
9 PRACTICE IN PRIMARY CARE CRITICAL NEEDS SHORTAGE AREAS, AND TO
10 REQUIRE NO LESS THAN EIGHT YEARS SERVICE IN EXCHANGE FOR LOAN
11 REPAYMENTS THROUGH THE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 SECTION 1. Section 37-143-6, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
14 amended as follows:

15 37-143-6. (1) There is established a medical education
16 scholarship and loan repayment program, which shall be
17 administered by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of
18 Higher Learning. Each year, the program shall provide a certain
19 number of eligible applicants, if the applicant meets the
20 conditions upon which the scholarship or loan repayment is
21 granted, with: (a) a full scholarship to obtain a medical
22 education at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine at
23 no cost to the recipient; or (b) funds for repaying state and
24 federal medical education loans.

25 (2) The program shall provide scholarships or loan
26 repayments to up to twenty (20) new recipients each year, of which
27 no more than ten (10) may be recipients of loan repayments. The
28 program shall be funded from monies appropriated from the Health
29 Care Expendable Fund established under Section 43-13-407 * * *.
30 The amounts that may be expended annually for scholarships and

31 loan repayments under the program shall not exceed the following:
32 Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) in fiscal year 2001;
33 One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) in fiscal year 2002; One
34 Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000.00) in fiscal
35 year 2003; and Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) in fiscal year
36 2004 and in any later fiscal year.

37 (3) A scholarship awarded under this program shall be in an
38 amount that will pay the full cost of attendance, as defined by
39 federal law and regulation, at the University of Mississippi
40 School of Medicine for the entire time necessary for the recipient
41 to complete the requirements for a medical degree. The actual
42 amount of the scholarship shall be determined by the Office of
43 Financial Aid of the University of Mississippi Medical Center but
44 shall not exceed Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) per
45 year for any recipient.

46 (4) Before being granted a scholarship, each applicant shall
47 enter into a contract with the board of trustees, which shall be
48 deemed a contract with the State of Mississippi, agreeing to the
49 terms and conditions upon which the scholarship will be granted.
50 In order to receive a scholarship under the program, the recipient
51 must agree in the contract to practice family medicine for a
52 period of not less than ten (10) years after completion of his or
53 her residency in an area of the state that is a critical needs
54 area for primary medical care at the time of the recipient's entry
55 into medical practice. The determination and designation of the
56 areas of the state that are critical needs areas for primary
57 medical care in which scholarship recipients may practice shall be
58 made by a committee to be known as the Medical Care Critical Needs
59 Committee, which shall be composed of the following persons: the
60 Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs of the University of
61 Mississippi Medical Center, who shall be chairman of the
62 committee; the Executive Director of the State Department of
63 Health; the Executive Director of the Division of Medicaid; the

64 President of the Mississippi State Medical Association or his
65 designee; the President of the Mississippi State Hospital
66 Association or his designee; the President of the Mississippi
67 Academy of Family Physicians; and the Executive Director of the
68 Mississippi Primary Health Care Association. The committee shall
69 meet at least once annually to determine and designate the areas
70 of the state that are critical needs areas for primary medical
71 care in which scholarship recipients may practice family medicine
72 in order to fulfill their contractual obligation.

73 (5) (a) Beginning on July 1, 2001, the Board of Trustees of
74 State Institutions of Higher Learning may use any funds available
75 under the medical education scholarship and loan repayment program
76 for repaying state and federal medical education loans made to
77 licensed family medicine physicians who agree to practice family
78 medicine for a period of not less than eight (8) years in an area
79 of the state that is a critical needs area for primary medical
80 care, as designated by the Medical Care Critical Needs Committee.
81 The board of trustees shall use such funds to apply for and
82 receive federal matching funds from the National Health Service
83 Corps to assist in the repayment of qualified educational loans
84 for primary health care clinicians who agree to practice in a
85 critical needs area for primary medical care. In order to receive
86 a state loan repayment under this section, an applicant must enter
87 into a contract with the board of trustees, which shall be deemed
88 a contract with the State of Mississippi, agreeing to the terms
89 and conditions upon which the loan repayment will be granted. The
90 contract must include all conditions specified under subsection
91 (4) for scholarship recipients; however, for a loan repayment, the
92 minimum period of service required in an area of the state that is
93 a critical needs area for primary medical care at the time the
94 contract is executed is eight (8) years. The contract also must
95 specify the total amount of the loan repayment and a schedule for

96 making payments to the recipient, based upon the recommendation of
97 the Medical Care Critical Needs Committee.

98 (b) The board of trustees shall give priority in
99 rewarding loan repayments to family medicine physicians according
100 to the following:

101 (i) University of Mississippi School of Medicine
102 graduates or persons who have completed successfully a full
103 three-year family medicine residency training program in the State
104 of Mississippi;

105 (ii) Persons who were born in Mississippi who have
106 completed training in a certified family medicine residency
107 program outside the State of Mississippi; and

108 (iii) Physicians who are practicing outside the
109 State of Mississippi who received training at a medical school
110 outside the state and who are board certified in family practice.

111 (c) The Medical Care Critical Needs Committee shall
112 meet at least once annually to determine and designate the areas
113 of the state that are critical needs areas for primary medical
114 care in which loan repayment recipients may practice family
115 medicine and other primary care health professional disciplines in
116 order to fulfill their contractual obligation. The committee also
117 shall determine the priority of additional primary health care
118 clinicians who are eligible to participate in the state loan
119 repayment program using any National Health Service Corps matching
120 funds or other funds excluding funds appropriated by the
121 Legislature.

122 (6) If a scholarship recipient leaves the University of
123 Mississippi School of Medicine before graduation, or leaves his or
124 her residency before completion, or fails to practice family
125 medicine for a period of ten (10) years in a critical needs area
126 for primary medical care as designated by the Medical Care
127 Critical Needs Committee under subsection (4) of this section, the
128 full amount that the recipient received under the scholarship

129 shall be due and payable within ninety (90) days, together with
130 interest. If a loan repayment recipient fails to practice family
131 medicine for a period of eight (8) years in a critical needs area
132 for primary medical care as designated by the Medical Care
133 Critical Needs Committee under subsection (5)(c) of this section,
134 the full amount that the recipient received for loan repayments
135 shall be due and payable within ninety (90) days, together with
136 interest. The amount of interest due shall be equal to the annual
137 rate of return on the Health Care Trust Fund established under
138 Section 43-13-405 for each year from the time the recipient
139 received the scholarship or loan repayment money until the time
140 the scholarship or loan repayment money is repaid. The board of
141 trustees may bring suit against any scholarship or loan repayment
142 recipient to recover the amount due to the state under this
143 section for the recipient's failure to comply with the conditions
144 upon which the scholarship or loan repayment was granted, as
145 provided in this section and in the contract between the recipient
146 and the board of trustees. The board of trustees is authorized to
147 postpone or forgive the repayment of all or part of the amount
148 that a recipient received under the scholarship or for loan
149 repayments and the interest that would otherwise be due under this
150 subsection if the recipient's failure to comply with the
151 conditions upon which the scholarship or loan repayment was
152 granted was due to circumstances beyond the recipient's control
153 that caused the recipient to be physically unable to comply with
154 those conditions, such as suffering a severe illness, injury or
155 other disabling condition.

156 (7) The board of trustees shall establish such rules and
157 regulations, based upon recommendations submitted by the Medical
158 Care Critical Needs Committee, which it deems necessary and proper
159 to carry out the purposes and intent of this section.

160 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
161 and after July 1, 2001.