

By: Representatives Reynolds, Baker (74th), Blackmon, Brown, Calhoun, Coleman (29th), Cummings, Dedeaux, Eaton, Franks, Gibbs, Green, Holloway, Jennings, Markham, Mayhall, McBride, Miles, Moak, Montgomery, Moss, Pierce, Robinson (63rd), Rogers (61st), Smith (59th), Vince, Ward, Watson, Weathersby, Whittington, Peranich, Scott, Straughter, Evans, Patterson, Hamilton (6th)

To: Public Health and Human Services; Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 850

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE MISSISSIPPI SENIORS AND INDIGENTS RX  
2 PROGRAM IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH; TO PROVIDE THAT THE  
3 PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO HELP SENIOR CITIZENS AND QUALIFIED  
4 INDIGENTS ACCESS PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS' DISCOUNT CARDS AND  
5 PHARMACEUTICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND TO PROVIDE SENIORS AND  
6 QUALIFIED INDIGENTS WITH APPLICATIONS FOR THOSE PROGRAMS; TO  
7 PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL COORDINATE THE OPERATION OF THE  
8 PROGRAM WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES TO MAXIMIZE THE SERVICES  
9 AVAILABLE AND MINIMIZE THE PAPERWORK AND INCONVENIENCE TO THE  
10 SENIORS AND QUALIFIED INDIGENTS; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO  
11 DEVELOP, MAINTAIN AND MAKE AVAILABLE AN INTERNET-BASED APPLICATION  
12 FORM TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND TO THOSE OTHER STATE AGENCIES SO  
13 THAT SENIORS AND QUALIFIED INDIGENTS MAY GET APPLICATIONS FOR  
14 PHARMACEUTICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AT THE LOCAL OFFICES OF ANY OF  
15 THOSE STATE AGENCIES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PREPARE  
16 AND SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE PROGRAM TO CERTAIN STATE  
17 OFFICIALS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

19 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
20 "Mississippi Seniors and Indigents Rx Program."

21 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms shall  
22 have the following meanings:

23 (a) "Department" means the State Department of Health.

24 (b) "Program" means the Mississippi Seniors and  
25 Indigents Rx Program established in this act.

26 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Legislature finds that many low income  
27 seniors and other indigents are unaware of bona fide assistance  
28 programs that are voluntarily offered by pharmaceutical  
29 manufacturers to the elderly and underprivileged. It is the  
30 intent of the Legislature to take steps necessary to make it more  
31 widely known that such assistance is available and to make it  
32 easier for people to apply for that assistance.

33 (2) The Mississippi Seniors and Indigents Rx Program is  
34 established in the State Department of Health to help seniors and

35 qualified indigents in accessing pharmaceutical manufacturers'  
36 discount cards and pharmaceutical assistance programs and to  
37 provide seniors and qualified indigents with applications for  
38 those programs. The department shall coordinate the operation of  
39 the program with the Division of Medicaid, the Department of  
40 Mental Health, the Department of Human Services and the State  
41 Department of Rehabilitation Services to insure that the services  
42 available under the program are maximized and that paperwork and  
43 inconvenience to the seniors and qualified indigents are  
44 minimized. The department may develop, maintain and make  
45 available an Internet-based application form to the general public  
46 and to each of those state agencies so that seniors and qualified  
47 indigents may get applications for pharmaceutical assistance  
48 programs at the local offices of any of those state agencies. The  
49 department may coordinate with pharmaceutical manufacturers to  
50 obtain program applications at no cost to the state.

51 **SECTION 4.** Subject to appropriation for the program, the  
52 department may provide assistance to persons determined to be  
53 eligible for services authorized by this act. The assistance  
54 provided by the department may include:

55 (a) Assisting seniors and qualified indigents in  
56 accessing manufacturers' pharmaceutical assistance program  
57 applications; and

58 (b) Assisting seniors and qualified indigents in  
59 applying for manufacturers' pharmaceutical assistance programs.

60 **SECTION 5.** The department may seek and receive voluntary  
61 monies from any sources, including federal funds and gifts, which  
62 shall be expended for the purposes specified in this act. The  
63 department also may accept voluntary funding in the form of grants  
64 available to build community, public sector and private sector  
65 partnerships. The department shall include within the development  
66 of the program the assistance of foundations, independent and  
67 chain community pharmacists, volunteers, state agencies, community

68 groups, religious groups, area agencies on aging, corporations,  
69 hospitals, physicians, and any other entity that can further the  
70 intent of the program.

71 **SECTION 6.** The department shall prepare and submit an annual  
72 report on the program to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor,  
73 Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the  
74 Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee and the Chairman of the  
75 House Public Health and Human Services Committee. Those reports  
76 shall include the number of clients served, the number of  
77 prescriptions filled and refilled, and the value of the drugs  
78 provided.

79 **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
80 and after July 1, 2004.