

By: Senator(s) Robertson

To: Education;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2565

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 25-15-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 ALLOW ANY SCHOOL DISTRICT, COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT OR  
3 PUBLIC LIBRARY UNTIL OCTOBER 1, 2004, TO CHOOSE A POLICY OR  
4 POLICIES OF GROUP LIFE INSURANCE WITH AN INSURANCE COMPANY  
5 APPROVED BY THE STATE AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES HEALTH INSURANCE  
6 MANAGEMENT BOARD IN LIEU OF PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE AND SCHOOL  
7 LIFE INSURANCE PLAN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 SECTION 1. Section 25-15-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
10 amended as follows:

11 [Through June 30 of the year in which Section 25-11-143  
12 becomes effective as provided in subsection (1) of Section  
13 25-11-143, this section shall read as follows:]

14 25-15-9. (1) (a) The board shall design a plan of health  
15 insurance for state employees which provides benefits for  
16 semiprivate rooms in addition to other incidental coverages which  
17 the board deems necessary. The amount of the coverages shall be  
18 in such reasonable amount as may be determined by the board to be  
19 adequate, after due consideration of current health costs in  
20 Mississippi. The plan shall also include major medical benefits  
21 in such amounts as the board shall determine. The board is also  
22 authorized to accept bids for such alternate coverage and optional  
23 benefits as the board shall deem proper. Any contract for  
24 alternative coverage and optional benefits shall be awarded by the  
25 board after it has carefully studied and evaluated the bids and  
26 selected the best and most cost-effective bid. The board may  
27 reject all such bids; however, the board shall notify all bidders  
28 of the rejection and shall actively solicit new bids if all bids  
29 are rejected. The board may employ or contract for such

30 consulting or actuarial services as may be necessary to formulate  
31 the plan, and to assist the board in the preparation of  
32 specifications and in the process of advertising for the bids for  
33 the plan. Such contracts shall be solicited and entered into in  
34 accordance with Section 25-15-5. The board shall keep a record of  
35 all persons, agents and corporations who contract with or assist  
36 the board in preparing and developing the plan. The board in a  
37 timely manner shall provide copies of this record to the members  
38 of the advisory council created in this section and those  
39 legislators, or their designees, who may attend meetings of the  
40 advisory council. The board shall provide copies of this record  
41 in the solicitation of bids for the administration or servicing of  
42 the self-insured program. Each person, agent or corporation  
43 which, during the previous fiscal year, has assisted in the  
44 development of the plan or employed or compensated any person who  
45 assisted in the development of the plan, and which bids on the  
46 administration or servicing of the plan, shall submit to the board  
47 a statement accompanying the bid explaining in detail its  
48 participation with the development of the plan. This statement  
49 shall include the amount of compensation paid by the bidder to any  
50 such employee during the previous fiscal year. The board shall  
51 make all such information available to the members of the advisory  
52 council and those legislators, or their designees, who may attend  
53 meetings of the advisory council before any action is taken by the  
54 board on the bids submitted. The failure of any bidder to fully  
55 and accurately comply with this paragraph shall result in the  
56 rejection of any bid submitted by that bidder or the cancellation  
57 of any contract executed when the failure is discovered after the  
58 acceptance of that bid. The board is authorized to promulgate  
59 rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this  
60 subsection.

61           The board shall develop plans for the insurance plan  
62 authorized by this section in accordance with the provisions of  
63 Section 25-15-5.

64           Any corporation, association, company or individual that  
65 contracts with the board for the third-party claims administration  
66 of the self-insured plan shall prepare and keep on file an  
67 explanation of benefits for each claim processed. The explanation  
68 of benefits shall contain such information relative to each  
69 processed claim which the board deems necessary, and, at a  
70 minimum, each explanation shall provide the claimant's name, claim  
71 number, provider number, provider name, service dates, type of  
72 services, amount of charges, amount allowed to the claimant and  
73 reason codes. The information contained in the explanation of  
74 benefits shall be available for inspection upon request by the  
75 board. The board shall have access to all claims information  
76 utilized in the issuance of payments to employees and providers.

77           (b) There is created an advisory council to advise the  
78 board in the formulation of the State and School Employees Health  
79 Insurance Plan. The council shall be composed of the State  
80 Insurance Commissioner or his designee, an employee-representative  
81 of the institutions of higher learning appointed by the board of  
82 trustees thereof, an employee-representative of the Department of  
83 Transportation appointed by the director thereof, an  
84 employee-representative of the State Tax Commission appointed by  
85 the Commissioner of Revenue, an employee-representative of the  
86 Mississippi Department of Health appointed by the State Health  
87 Officer, an employee-representative of the Mississippi Department  
88 of Corrections appointed by the Commissioner of Corrections, and  
89 an employee-representative of the Department of Human Services  
90 appointed by the Executive Director of Human Services, two (2)  
91 certificated public school administrators appointed by the State  
92 Board of Education, two (2) certificated classroom teachers  
93 appointed by the State Board of Education, a noncertificated

94 school employee appointed by the State Board of Education and a  
95 community/junior college employee appointed by the State Board for  
96 Community and Junior Colleges.

97         The Lieutenant Governor may designate the Secretary of the  
98 Senate, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the  
99 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the  
100 Senate Insurance Committee, and the Speaker of the House of  
101 Representatives may designate the Clerk of the House, the Chairman  
102 of the House Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House  
103 Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Insurance  
104 Committee, to attend any meeting of the State and School Employees  
105 Insurance Advisory Council. The appointing authorities may  
106 designate an alternate member from their respective houses to  
107 serve when the regular designee is unable to attend such meetings  
108 of the council. Such designees shall have no jurisdiction or vote  
109 on any matter within the jurisdiction of the council. For  
110 attending meetings of the council, such legislators shall receive  
111 per diem and expenses which shall be paid from the contingent  
112 expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts as  
113 provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in  
114 session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending meetings  
115 of the council will be paid while the Legislature is in session.  
116 No per diem and expenses will be paid except for attending  
117 meetings of the council without prior approval of the proper  
118 committee in their respective houses.

119         (c) No change in the terms of the State and School  
120 Employees Health Insurance Plan may be made effective unless the  
121 board, or its designee, has provided notice to the State and  
122 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council and has called  
123 a meeting of the council at least fifteen (15) days before the  
124 effective date of such change. In the event that the State and  
125 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council does not meet  
126 to advise the board on the proposed changes, the changes to the

127 plan shall become effective at such time as the board has informed  
128 the council that the changes shall become effective.

129           (d) **Medical benefits for retired employees and**  
130 **dependents under age sixty-five (65) years and not eligible for**  
131 **Medicare benefits.** The same health insurance coverage as for all  
132 other active employees and their dependents shall be available to  
133 retired employees and all dependents under age sixty-five (65)  
134 years who are not eligible for Medicare benefits, the level of  
135 benefits to be the same level as for all other active  
136 participants. This section will apply to those employees who  
137 retire due to one hundred percent (100%) medical disability as  
138 well as those employees electing early retirement.

139           (e) **Medical benefits for retired employees and**  
140 **dependents over age sixty-five (65) years or otherwise eligible**  
141 **for Medicare benefits.** The health insurance coverage available to  
142 retired employees over age sixty-five (65) years or otherwise  
143 eligible for Medicare benefits, and all dependents over age  
144 sixty-five (65) years or otherwise eligible for Medicare benefits,  
145 shall be the major medical coverage with the lifetime maximum of  
146 One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00). Benefits shall be reduced by  
147 Medicare benefits as though such Medicare benefits were the base  
148 plan.

149           All covered individuals shall be assumed to have full  
150 Medicare coverage, Parts A and B; and any Medicare payments under  
151 both Parts A and B shall be computed to reduce benefits payable  
152 under this plan.

153           (2) Nonduplication of benefits--reduction of benefits by  
154 Title XIX benefits: When benefits would be payable under more  
155 than one (1) group plan, benefits under those plans will be  
156 coordinated to the extent that the total benefits under all plans  
157 will not exceed the total expenses incurred.

158           Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall  
159 be reduced by any similar benefits payable in accordance with

160 Title XIX of the Social Security Act or under any amendments  
161 thereto, or any implementing legislation.

162 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall  
163 be reduced by any similar benefits payable by workers'  
164 compensation.

165 (3) (a) Schedule of life insurance benefits--group term:  
166 The amount of term life insurance for each active employee of a  
167 department, agency or institution of the state government shall  
168 not be in excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or  
169 twice the amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest  
170 One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no  
171 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like  
172 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a  
173 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium  
174 waiver provision if a covered employee becomes totally and  
175 permanently disabled prior to age sixty-five (65) years.  
176 Employees retiring after June 30, 1999, shall be eligible to  
177 continue life insurance coverage in an amount of Five Thousand  
178 Dollars (\$5,000.00), Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) or Twenty  
179 Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) into retirement.

180 (b) Effective October 1, 1999, schedule of life  
181 insurance benefits--group term: The amount of term life insurance  
182 for each active employee of any school district, community/junior  
183 college, public library or university-based program authorized  
184 under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and emotionally disturbed  
185 children or any regular nonstudent bus driver shall not be in  
186 excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or twice the  
187 amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest One  
188 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no  
189 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like  
190 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a  
191 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium  
192 waiver provision if a covered employee of any school district,

193 community/junior college, public library or university-based  
194 program authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and  
195 emotionally disturbed children or any regular nonstudent bus  
196 driver becomes totally and permanently disabled prior to age  
197 sixty-five (65) years. Employees of any school district,  
198 community/junior college, public library or university-based  
199 program authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and  
200 emotionally disturbed children or any regular nonstudent bus  
201 driver retiring after September 30, 1999, shall be eligible to  
202 continue life insurance coverage in an amount of Five Thousand  
203 Dollars (\$5,000.00), Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) or Twenty  
204 Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) into retirement.

205 (4) Any eligible employee who on March 1, 1971, was  
206 participating in a group life insurance program which has  
207 provisions different from those included herein and for which the  
208 State of Mississippi was paying a part of the premium may, at his  
209 discretion, continue to participate in such plan. Such employee  
210 shall pay in full all additional costs, if any, above the minimum  
211 program established by this article. Under no circumstances shall  
212 any individual who begins employment with the state after March 1,  
213 1971, be eligible for the provisions of this paragraph.

214 (5) The board may offer medical savings accounts as defined  
215 in Section 71-9-3 as a plan option.

216 (6) Any premium differentials, differences in coverages,  
217 discounts determined by risk or by any other factors shall be  
218 uniformly applied to all active employees participating in the  
219 insurance plan. It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
220 state contribution to the plan be the same for each employee  
221 throughout the state.

222 (7) On October 1, 1999, any school district,  
223 community/junior college district or public library may elect to  
224 remain with an existing policy or policies of group life insurance  
225 with an insurance company approved by the State and School

226 Employees Health Insurance Management Board, in lieu of  
227 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. On or  
228 after July 1, 2004, until October 1, 2004, any school district,  
229 community/junior college district or public library may elect to  
230 choose a policy or policies of group life insurance with an  
231 insurance company approved by the State and School Employees  
232 Health Insurance Management Board in lieu of participation in the  
233 State and School Life Insurance Plan. The state's contribution of  
234 up to fifty percent (50%) of the active employee's premium under  
235 the State and School Life Insurance Plan may be applied toward the  
236 cost of coverage for full-time employees participating in the  
237 approved life insurance company group plan. For purposes of this  
238 subsection (7), "life insurance company group plan" means a plan  
239 administered or sold by a private insurance company. After  
240 October 1, 1999, the board may assess charges in addition to the  
241 existing State and School Life Insurance Plan rates to such  
242 employees as a condition of enrollment in the State and School  
243 Life Insurance Plan. In order for any life insurance company  
244 group plan \* \* \* to be approved by the State and School Employees  
245 Health Insurance Management Board under this subsection (7), it  
246 shall meet the following criteria:

247 (a) The insurance company offering the group life  
248 insurance plan shall be rated "A-" or better by A.M. Best state  
249 insurance rating service and be licensed as an admitted carrier in  
250 the State of Mississippi by the Mississippi Department of  
251 Insurance.

252 (b) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
253 shall provide the same life insurance, accidental death and  
254 dismemberment insurance and waiver of premium benefits as provided  
255 in the State and School Life Insurance Plan.

256 (c) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
257 shall be fully insured, and no form of self-funding life insurance  
258 by such company shall be approved.



259           (d) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
260 shall have one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars  
261 (\$1,000.00) of coverage for active employees regardless of age and  
262 one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) of  
263 coverage for all retirees regardless of age or type of retiree.

264           (e) The insurance company and its group life insurance  
265 plan shall comply with any administrative requirements of the  
266 State and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board. In  
267 the event any insurance company providing group life insurance  
268 benefits to employees under this subsection (7) fails to comply  
269 with any requirements specified herein or any administrative  
270 requirements of the board, the state shall discontinue providing  
271 funding for the cost of such insurance.

272           **[From and after July 1 of the year in which Section 25-11-143**  
273 **becomes effective as provided in subsection (1) of Section**  
274 **25-11-143, this section shall read as follows:]**

275           25-15-9. (1) (a) The board shall design a plan of health  
276 insurance for state employees that provides benefits for  
277 semiprivate rooms in addition to other incidental coverages that  
278 the board deems necessary. The amount of the coverages shall be  
279 in such reasonable amount as may be determined by the board to be  
280 adequate, after due consideration of current health costs in  
281 Mississippi. The plan shall also include major medical benefits  
282 in such amounts as the board shall determine. The board is also  
283 authorized to accept bids for such alternate coverage and optional  
284 benefits as the board deems proper. Any contract for alternative  
285 coverage and optional benefits shall be awarded by the board after  
286 it has carefully studied and evaluated the bids and selected the  
287 best and most cost-effective bid. The board may reject all such  
288 bids; however, the board shall notify all bidders of the rejection  
289 and shall actively solicit new bids if all bids are rejected. The  
290 board may employ or contract for such consulting or actuarial  
291 services as may be necessary to formulate the plan, and to assist

292 the board in the preparation of specifications and in the process  
293 of advertising for the bids for the plan. Those contracts shall  
294 be solicited and entered into in accordance with Section 25-15-5.  
295 The board shall keep a record of all persons, agents and  
296 corporations who contract with or assist the board in preparing  
297 and developing the plan. The board in a timely manner shall  
298 provide copies of this record to the members of the advisory  
299 council created in this section and those legislators, or their  
300 designees, who may attend meetings of the advisory council. The  
301 board shall provide copies of this record in the solicitation of  
302 bids for the administration or servicing of the self-insured  
303 program. Each person, agent or corporation that, during the  
304 previous fiscal year, has assisted in the development of the plan  
305 or employed or compensated any person who assisted in the  
306 development of the plan, and that bids on the administration or  
307 servicing of the plan, shall submit to the board a statement  
308 accompanying the bid explaining in detail its participation with  
309 the development of the plan. This statement shall include the  
310 amount of compensation paid by the bidder to any such employee  
311 during the previous fiscal year. The board shall make all such  
312 information available to the members of the advisory council and  
313 those legislators, or their designees, who may attend meetings of  
314 the advisory council before any action is taken by the board on  
315 the bids submitted. The failure of any bidder to fully and  
316 accurately comply with this paragraph shall result in the  
317 rejection of any bid submitted by that bidder or the cancellation  
318 of any contract executed when the failure is discovered after the  
319 acceptance of that bid. The board is authorized to promulgate  
320 rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this  
321 subsection.

322 The board shall develop plans for the insurance plan  
323 authorized by this section in accordance with the provisions of  
324 Section 25-15-5.

325 Any corporation, association, company or individual that  
326 contracts with the board for the third-party claims administration  
327 of the self-insured plan shall prepare and keep on file an  
328 explanation of benefits for each claim processed. The explanation  
329 of benefits shall contain such information relative to each  
330 processed claim which the board deems necessary, and, at a  
331 minimum, each explanation shall provide the claimant's name, claim  
332 number, provider number, provider name, service dates, type of  
333 services, amount of charges, amount allowed to the claimant and  
334 reason codes. The information contained in the explanation of  
335 benefits shall be available for inspection upon request by the  
336 board. The board shall have access to all claims information  
337 utilized in the issuance of payments to employees and providers.

338 (b) There is created an advisory council to advise the  
339 board in the formulation of the State and School Employees Health  
340 Insurance Plan. The council shall be composed of the State  
341 Insurance Commissioner or his designee, an employee-representative  
342 of the state institutions of higher learning appointed by the  
343 board of trustees thereof, an employee-representative of the  
344 Mississippi Department of Transportation appointed by the director  
345 thereof, an employee-representative of the State Tax Commission  
346 appointed by the Commissioner of Revenue, an  
347 employee-representative of the State Department of Health  
348 appointed by the State Health Officer, an employee-representative  
349 of the Mississippi Department of Corrections appointed by the  
350 Commissioner of Corrections, and an employee-representative of the  
351 Mississippi Department of Human Services appointed by the  
352 Executive Director of Human Services, two (2) certificated public  
353 school administrators appointed by the State Board of Education,  
354 two (2) certificated classroom teachers appointed by the State  
355 Board of Education, a noncertificated school employee appointed by  
356 the State Board of Education and a community/junior college

357 employee appointed by the State Board for Community and Junior  
358 Colleges.

359         The Lieutenant Governor may designate the Secretary of the  
360 Senate, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the  
361 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the  
362 Senate Insurance Committee, and the Speaker of the House of  
363 Representatives may designate the Clerk of the House, the Chairman  
364 of the House Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House  
365 Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Insurance  
366 Committee, to attend any meeting of the State and School Employees  
367 Insurance Advisory Council. The appointing authorities may  
368 designate an alternate member from their respective houses to  
369 serve when the regular designee is unable to attend such meetings  
370 of the council. Those designees shall have no jurisdiction or  
371 vote on any matter within the jurisdiction of the council. For  
372 attending meetings of the council, those legislators shall receive  
373 per diem and expenses, which shall be paid from the contingent  
374 expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts as  
375 provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in  
376 session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending meetings  
377 of the council will be paid while the Legislature is in session.  
378 No per diem and expenses will be paid except for attending  
379 meetings of the council without prior approval of the proper  
380 committee in their respective houses.

381         (c) No change in the terms of the State and School  
382 Employees Health Insurance Plan may be made effective unless the  
383 board, or its designee, has provided notice to the State and  
384 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council and has called  
385 a meeting of the council at least fifteen (15) days before the  
386 effective date of the change. If the State and School Employees  
387 Health Insurance Advisory Council does not meet to advise the  
388 board on the proposed changes, the changes to the plan will become

389 effective at such time as the board has informed the council that  
390 the changes will become effective.

391 (2) Nonduplication of benefits--reduction of benefits by  
392 Title XIX benefits: When benefits would be payable under more  
393 than one (1) group plan, benefits under those plans will be  
394 coordinated to the extent that the total benefits under all plans  
395 will not exceed the total expenses incurred.

396 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall  
397 be reduced by any similar benefits payable in accordance with  
398 Title XIX of the Social Security Act or under any amendments  
399 thereto, or any implementing legislation.

400 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall  
401 be reduced by any similar benefits payable by workers'  
402 compensation.

403 (3) (a) Schedule of life insurance benefits--group term:  
404 The amount of term life insurance for each active employee of a  
405 department, agency or institution of the state government shall  
406 not be in excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or  
407 twice the amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest  
408 One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no  
409 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like  
410 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a  
411 twenty-four-hour basis.

412 (b) Effective October 1, 1999, schedule of life  
413 insurance benefits--group term: The amount of term life insurance  
414 for each active employee of any school district, community/junior  
415 college, public library, university-based program authorized under  
416 Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and emotionally disturbed  
417 children, or any regular nonstudent bus driver shall not be in  
418 excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or twice the  
419 amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest One  
420 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no  
421 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like

422 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a  
423 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium  
424 waiver provision if a covered employee of any school district,  
425 community/junior college, public library, university-based program  
426 authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and  
427 emotionally disturbed children, or any regular nonstudent bus  
428 driver becomes totally and permanently disabled before age  
429 sixty-five (65) years.

430 (4) Any eligible employee who on March 1, 1971, was  
431 participating in a group life insurance program that has  
432 provisions different from those included in this section and for  
433 which the State of Mississippi was paying a part of the premium  
434 may, at his discretion, continue to participate in that plan. The  
435 employee shall pay in full all additional costs, if any, above the  
436 minimum program established by this article. Under no  
437 circumstances shall any individual who begins employment with the  
438 state after March 1, 1971, be eligible for the provisions of this  
439 paragraph.

440 (5) The board may offer medical savings accounts as defined  
441 in Section 71-9-3 as a plan option.

442 (6) Any premium differentials, differences in coverages,  
443 discounts determined by risk or by any other factors shall be  
444 uniformly applied to all active employees participating in the  
445 insurance plan. It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
446 state contribution to the plan be the same for each employee  
447 throughout the state.

448 (7) On October 1, 1999, any school district,  
449 community/junior college district or public library may elect to  
450 remain with an existing policy or policies of group life insurance  
451 with an insurance company approved by the State and School  
452 Employees Health Insurance Management Board, in lieu of  
453 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. On or  
454 after July 1, 2004, until October 1, 2004, any school district,

455 community/junior college district or public library may elect to  
456 choose a policy or policies of group life insurance with an  
457 insurance company approved by the State and School Employees  
458 Health Insurance Management Board in lieu of participation in the  
459 State and School Life Insurance Plan. The state's contribution of  
460 up to fifty percent (50%) of the active employee's premium under  
461 the State and School Life Insurance Plan may be applied toward the  
462 cost of coverage for full-time employees participating in the  
463 approved life insurance company group plan. For purposes of this  
464 subsection (7), "life insurance company group plan" means a plan  
465 administered or sold by a private insurance company. After  
466 October 1, 1999, the board may assess charges in addition to the  
467 existing State and School Life Insurance Plan rates to those  
468 employees as a condition of enrollment in the State and School  
469 Life Insurance Plan. In order for any life insurance company  
470 group plan \* \* \* to be approved by the State and School Employees  
471 Health Insurance Management Board under this subsection (7), it  
472 shall meet the following criteria:

473 (a) The insurance company offering the group life  
474 insurance plan shall be rated "A-" or better by A.M. Best state  
475 insurance rating service and be licensed as an admitted carrier in  
476 the State of Mississippi by the Mississippi Department of  
477 Insurance.

478 (b) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
479 shall provide the same life insurance, accidental death and  
480 dismemberment insurance and waiver of premium benefits as provided  
481 in the State and School Life Insurance Plan.

482 (c) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
483 shall be fully insured, and no form of self-funding life insurance  
484 by such company shall be approved.

485 (d) The insurance company group life insurance plan  
486 shall have one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars  
487 (\$1,000.00) of coverage for active employees regardless of age.

488                   (e) The insurance company and its group life insurance  
489 plan shall comply with any administrative requirements of the  
490 State and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board. If  
491 any insurance company providing group life insurance benefits to  
492 employees under this subsection (7) fails to comply with any  
493 requirements specified in this subsection or any administrative  
494 requirements of the board, the state shall discontinue providing  
495 funding for the cost of that insurance.

496                   **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
497 and after July 1, 2004.