

By: Representative Arinder

To: Judiciary A; County  
Affairs

HOUSE BILL NO. 959

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE USE OF INTERPRETERS IN ALL COURTS  
2 OF THE STATE; TO AMEND SECTION 99-17-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
3 IN CONFORMITY TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED  
4 PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Director of the Administrative Office of  
7 Courts shall establish a program to facilitate the use of  
8 interpreters in all courts of the State of Mississippi.

9 (2) (a) The Department of Education shall prescribe the  
10 qualifications of and certify persons who may serve as certified  
11 interpreters in all courts of the State of Mississippi in  
12 bilingual proceedings.

13 (b) The director shall maintain a current master list  
14 of all interpreters certified by the Department of Education and  
15 shall report annually to the Supreme Court on the frequency of  
16 requests for and the use and effectiveness of the interpreters.

17 (3) In all state court bilingual proceedings, the presiding  
18 judicial officer, with the assistance of the director, shall  
19 utilize the services of a certified interpreter to communicate  
20 verbatim all spoken or written words.

21 (4) All state courts shall maintain on file in the office of  
22 the clerk of the court a list of all persons who have been  
23 certified as interpreters by the Department of Education in  
24 accordance with the certification program established pursuant to  
25 this section.

26 (5) Interpreters shall be paid a reasonable compensation, as  
27 set by the court, payable out of the county treasury.

28           **SECTION 2.** Section 99-17-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
29 amended as follows:

30           99-17-7. In criminal cases, the court may appoint an  
31 interpreter who is certified as provided in Section 1 of this act  
32 when necessary, sworn truly to interpret, and allow him a  
33 reasonable compensation, as set by the court, payable out of the  
34 county treasury.

35           **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
36 and after July 1, 2005.