

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2358

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE AN ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADEQUATE
 2 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYING SOCIAL WORKERS IN
 3 SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVING THE HIGHEST INCIDENCE OF STUDENT DROPOUTS,
 4 SCHOOL RELATED VIOLENCE, JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, LOW TEST SCORES,
 5 SPECIAL EDUCATION POPULATION AND FREE OR REDUCED MEALS; TO DIRECT
 6 THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO DETERMINE WHICH SCHOOL
 7 DISTRICTS SHALL RECEIVE SUCH ALLOTMENTS; TO REQUIRE SOCIAL WORKERS
 8 EMPLOYED WITH SUCH FUNDS TO BE APPROPRIATELY LICENSED; TO
 9 AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROMULGATE RULES
 10 AND REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE ACTIVITIES OF SUCH SOCIAL WORKERS;
 11 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year,
 14 the State Department of Education shall allot One Million Dollars
 15 p(\$1,000,000.00) under the adequate education program to school
 16 districts designated under subsection (2) of this section for the
 17 purpose of employing a social worker. This social worker shall
 18 not replace any school counselor, school psychologist or
 19 psychometrist, but shall complement the support services available
 20 to all students in the public schools.

21 (2) The State Department of Education shall designate thirty
 22 (30) school districts to receive an allotment for the purpose of
 23 employing a social worker. The school districts shall be selected
 24 by the State Department of Education according to greatest need,
 25 as indicated by records of the State Department of Education and
 26 the Department of Human Services reflecting those school districts
 27 having the highest incidences of student dropouts, school related
 28 violence, juvenile delinquency, low test scores, special education
 29 population, and free or reduced meals.

30 (3) The State Department of Education may increase the
31 number of social worker positions funded each year beyond the
32 above requirements, as money is made available.

33 (4) The assignment of the state-funded social worker within
34 the school district shall be at the discretion of the local school
35 board, or designee with the following restrictions:

36 (a) Any individual employed with funds allotted under
37 this section must be appropriately licensed as a social worker
38 under Section 73-53-1 et seq.

39 (b) Social workers shall be full-time professional
40 personnel and shall spend a minimum of seventy-five percent (75%)
41 of work time in direct school social work activities.

42 (5) The State Department of Education may adopt rules and
43 regulations regarding the activities of the social workers as are
44 not inconsistent with this section or with Section 73-53-1 et seq.
45 Social workers may perform those services that are not
46 inconsistent with such rules and regulations.

47 (6) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a school district
48 from employing additional social workers with local or federal
49 funds.

50 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
51 and after July 1, 2005.