

By: Senator(s) Horhn

To: Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2535

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE STATE TRUTH COMMISSION; TO PRESCRIBE  
2 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION; TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
3 ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCEDURES TO INVESTIGATE GRIEVANCES REGISTERED  
4 WITH THE COMMISSION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** There is created the State Truth Commission,  
7 hereinafter referred to as the "commission." The commission  
8 consists of five (5) members appointed by the Governor with the  
9 advice and consent of the Senate. The Governor shall designate  
10 one (1) of the members as chairman. Each member shall devote his  
11 or her full time to the duties of his or her office and shall not  
12 engage in any other business or profession or hold any other  
13 public office.

14 **SECTION 2.** (1) The chairman of the commission may appoint  
15 assistants, officers, employees, committees and consultants for  
16 the commission as necessary and may prescribe their powers and  
17 duties.

18 (2) The chairman of the commission may create, abolish,  
19 transfer and consolidate offices within the commission as  
20 necessary for the efficient operation of the commission.

21 (3) In conducting the activities of the commission pursuant  
22 to this act, the chairman of the commission may request and  
23 receive assistance, information and data from any agency of the  
24 state, any political subdivision of the state or any public  
25 authority of the state.

26 **SECTION 3.** (1) The commission has the following powers and  
27 duties:

28           (a) To advise and assist the Governor and the  
29 Legislature in developing policies, plans and programs to increase  
30 racial diversity and enhance racial harmony in the state.

31           (b) To foster and promote research and study in the  
32 area of race relations.

33           (c) To investigate, review or take any other action as  
34 it deems necessary to answer complaints or grievances filed with  
35 the council regarding any state or local government agency or  
36 program.

37           (d) To make recommendations to administrators of state  
38 agencies in keeping with paragraph (a) of this section.

39           (e) To visit, inspect and appraise the management of  
40 state and local government programs.

41           (f) To establish procedures to assure the effective  
42 investigation of grievances brought to the attention of the  
43 commission concerning allegations of past racial problems. The  
44 procedures shall include receipt of written complaints, interviews  
45 of persons and on-site monitoring of conditions. In addition, the  
46 commission shall establish procedures for the speedy and impartial  
47 review of grievances.

48           (g) To place members of its staff, as it deems  
49 appropriate, as an outside monitor if, in the judgment of the  
50 commission, conditions warrant it.

51           (h) To establish, maintain and operate a training  
52 program for personnel employed by any state or local government  
53 agency or program for voluntary training opportunities.

54           (i) To collect and disseminate statistical and other  
55 information and to undertake research, studies and analyses  
56 through the personnel of the commission or in cooperation with any  
57 public or private agency.

58           (j) To adopt, amend or rescind the rules and  
59 regulations as necessary to perform the powers and duties of the  
60 commission.

61           (3) The commission, any member of the commission or any  
62 employee designated by the commission may require from any officer  
63 or employee of a state or local government agency or program any  
64 information necessary to carry out the powers and duties of the  
65 commission.

66           (4) The commission, any member of the commission or any  
67 employee designated by the commission may issue and enforce a  
68 subpoena and a subpoena duces tecum, administer oaths and examine  
69 persons under oath in accordance with civil laws and rules.

70           **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
71 and after July 1, 2005.