

By: Senator(s) Nunnelee, Albritton, Burton,  
Butler, Frazier, Jackson (11th), Jackson  
(32nd), Thomas, Tollison

To: Public Health and  
Welfare; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2931  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE MISSISSIPPI DISABILITY RESOURCE  
2 COMMISSION TO ASSIMILATE AND PROVIDE CURRENT INFORMATION, REFER  
3 PERSONS TO APPROPRIATE AGENCIES, FACILITATE COORDINATION OF AGENCY  
4 SERVICES, AND BE A COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE AND  
5 SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES; TO PRESCRIBE  
6 THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION AND PRESCRIBE ITS POWERS AND  
7 DUTIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is established the Mississippi  
10 Disability Resource Commission. The function of the commission is  
11 to:

12 (a) Assimilate and provide current information to  
13 persons who need health, special education or disability  
14 information or services;

15 (b) Refer those persons to the appropriate agencies to  
16 receive needed information or services;

17 (c) Facilitate coordination of services provided by  
18 agencies for the maximum benefit of persons who need health,  
19 special education or disability services;

20 (d) Be a comprehensive clearinghouse of information and  
21 single point of contact for people with disabilities related to  
22 potential service programs; and

23 (e) Otherwise assist persons who need health, special  
24 education or disability services in obtaining information and  
25 services.

26 (2) The powers and duties of the Mississippi Disability  
27 Resource Commission shall include, but are not limited to, or  
28 provided in any priority order, the following:

29           (a) To collect and analyze health, special education  
30 and disability-related data for use by state agencies,  
31 universities and colleges, organizations and private citizens;

32           (b) To advise the Governor, the Legislature, the  
33 Mississippi congressional delegation, state agencies, the business  
34 community, other public and private groups and the general public  
35 on health, special education and disability issues and concerns,  
36 and to make recommendations to address those identified matters,  
37 with emphasis on increasing opportunities for independence and  
38 employment;

39           (c) To coordinate and conduct public relations  
40 activities, including establishment of a permanent, statewide  
41 toll-free phone line for people with disabilities seeking access  
42 to services and programs, to promote the skills and capabilities  
43 of persons needing health, special education or disability  
44 services; and

45           (d) To submit an annual report to the Governor and to  
46 the Legislature with recommendations to address the needs of  
47 persons in Mississippi needing health, special education or  
48 disability services, and other pertinent data regarding health,  
49 special education or disability issues.

50           (3) The membership of the commission shall consist of  
51 thirteen (13) members as follows:

52           (a) The Executive Director of the State Department of  
53 Rehabilitation Services, or his or her designee;

54           (b) The Executive Director of the State Department of  
55 Mental Health, or his or her designee;

56           (c) The Executive Officer of the State Department of  
57 Health, or his or her designee;

58           (d) The State Superintendent of Public Education, or  
59 his or her designee;

60           (e) The Executive Director of the Division of Medicaid,  
61 or his or her designee;

62           (f) The Executive Director of the Department of Human  
63 Services, or his or her designee; and

64           (g) Three (3) appointments by the Governor and two (2)  
65 appointments each by the Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the  
66 House of Representatives.

67           Each of the appointments referenced in paragraph (g) of this  
68 subsection shall be a person with a disability, a representative  
69 of a disability advocacy group, or the parent of a person with a  
70 disability. Of these appointments, there shall be no more than  
71 one (1) appointment from the same consumer organization or  
72 advocacy group during the same term of appointment.

73           (4) Members appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor  
74 and Speaker of the House shall serve for terms that run  
75 concurrently with the terms of office of the appointing officials.  
76 An appointment to fill a vacancy, other than by expiration of a  
77 term of office, shall be made for the balance of the unexpired  
78 term.

79           (5) The members of the commission shall elect from their  
80 membership the chairperson and vice chairperson of the commission.  
81 The chairperson and vice chairperson shall be a member appointed  
82 under subsection (3)(g) of this section and a member from a state  
83 agency referenced in subsection (3)(a) through (f) of this  
84 section. The chairperson and vice chairperson shall serve for  
85 terms of one (1) year beginning on July 1 of each year, except  
86 that the terms of the first chairperson and vice chairperson shall  
87 begin on the date of their election to those positions. Each  
88 year at the expiration of the terms of the chairperson and vice  
89 chairperson, the vice chairperson during the preceding year shall  
90 serve as chairperson for the next year, and a new vice chairperson  
91 shall be elected according to the terms set forth in this  
92 subsection.

93           (6) The commission shall meet at least quarterly and hold  
94 other meetings as are necessary for the purpose of conducting

95 required business, not exceeding six (6) meetings in any one (1)  
96 fiscal year. If funds are available for that purpose, the  
97 appointed members of the commission may be paid per diem and  
98 travel expenses in accordance with the provisions of Sections  
99 25-3-69 and 25-3-41.

100 (7) The Mississippi Disability Resource Commission may  
101 receive and expend any monies appropriated by the Legislature,  
102 apply for and utilize grants, and receive gifts or any other  
103 appropriate source of funds to carry out the duties of office.

104 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
105 and after its passage.