

By: Representatives Rogers (61st), Ishee

To: Military Affairs

HOUSE BILL NO. 406

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 35-7-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 AUTHORIZE THE USE OF TELEPHONE POLLS OF VETERANS' HOME PURCHASE
3 BOARD MEMBERS TO EXPEDITE LOAN APPLICATIONS OF VETERANS BEFORE THE
4 NEXT BOARD MEETING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 35-7-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 35-7-15. Any person deeming himself a veteran, and desiring
9 to benefit under the provisions of this chapter, shall submit to
10 the board information, in such form as may be prescribed, that
11 will enable the board to determine his eligibility and
12 qualifications. The board may make such further inquiries and
13 investigations as it deems proper and necessary in order to
14 determine such eligibility and qualifications. Applicant priority
15 for processing shall be in accordance with the order in which the
16 fully completed application forms are received and verified as
17 eligible for consideration in the board's Pearl, Mississippi,
18 office. Once accepted, the qualified and eligible applicant will
19 retain his priority as on a waiting list until the time that funds
20 are available to fully process his application, or until it is
21 ascertained that the applicant is no longer eligible or qualified
22 for the loan, or until the applicant withdraws himself from
23 consideration. The board may suspend the taking of applications
24 from time to time based on availability of funds. The board shall
25 not maintain applications which are projected to exceed one (1)
26 year before final processing. In each instance of suspension, the
27 board will project a date in the future when applications will be

28 again accepted in order that persons inquiring for application may
29 know to do so after such date.

30 The board may act upon any purchase loan application or
31 related matter by telephone poll of the board members taken by the
32 executive director or his designee in order to facilitate an
33 applicant's loan request before the next meeting of the board.
34 Action taken upon such a poll may be taken only upon majority vote
35 of the entire board. The action of the board taken by telephone
36 poll shall be placed in the minutes of the board at its next
37 meeting.

38 Veterans who are otherwise qualified and who have a service
39 connected, permanent disability, as verified by the Veterans'
40 Administration or a branch of the United States Armed Forces,
41 rating fifty percent (50%) or greater, will receive priority over
42 other applicants waiting for consideration. Veterans who have not
43 purchased a single family, permanent home since their honorable
44 discharge from active duty and have not owned a single family
45 residence in the State of Mississippi while serving in the armed
46 services may be given priority over other veterans waiting to make
47 application. This priority will be second only to those veterans
48 given priority due to a service-connected disability of fifty
49 percent (50%) or greater. Such returning veterans must meet all
50 other eligibility and qualification criteria, including
51 Mississippi residence requirements. This priority will apply only
52 during the first five (5) years following the veteran's discharge
53 and will apply to veterans who served in Vietnam regardless of
54 time since discharge.

55 The board shall establish rules and procedures to provide a
56 waiting system, limitations on waiting, and the priority
57 preference given to disabled and other special veteran groups when
58 the number of veterans desiring to apply for a purchase at any
59 time exceeds the funds available in the revolving fund for

60 purchases or the number of applications that can be reasonably
61 processed.

62 It is the intent of the Legislature that access to the
63 revolving fund be available on an equitable basis to all eligible
64 veterans throughout the state. The board is, therefore,
65 authorized to travel, conduct and attend meetings, advertise and
66 announce through public service and commercial media, prepare and
67 distribute audio/visual and printed publications, and otherwise
68 announce and promote among veterans the provisions of this law.

69 The board shall monitor application and purchase distribution
70 throughout the state based upon available information concerning
71 veteran population in certain geographic units such as districts,
72 counties and major metropolitan areas, and is authorized to halt,
73 limit or place temporary moratoriums on further purchase
74 applications from areas determined by the board to have excess
75 purchases in relation to the veteran population of that area. At
76 the same time, the board shall have the authority to employ
77 discriminatory announcement and promotion activities in areas
78 determined to have a shortage of purchases. The board shall not
79 set quotas or other inflexible limits on any geographic unit nor
80 shall the board solicit purchase applications from any veteran,
81 group of veterans or geographic unit.

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