

By: Representative McBride

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 978
(As Passed the House)

1 AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HUNTING LANDS OF MISSISSIPPI; TO ENSURE
2 THAT LAND WILL ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE TO THE CITIZENS OF MISSISSIPPI
3 FOR PURPOSES OF HUNTING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** All persons shall have the right to hunt and fish
6 in this state in accordance with laws enacted by the Legislature
7 and rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the
8 Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.

9 **SECTION 2.** (1) Subject to the right to hunt and fish as
10 described in Section 1 of this act, lands and waters managed by
11 the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks shall be open to
12 access and use for recreational hunting and fishing, except as
13 limited by the commission for reasons of public safety, homeland
14 security, or as otherwise limited by law.

15 (2) The commission shall exercise its authority to manage
16 lands and waters in a manner to support, promote and enhance
17 recreational hunting and fishing opportunities to the extent
18 authorized by law.

19 (3) The commission is not required to give preference to
20 hunting or fishing over other uses or priorities established by
21 state law.

22 (4) To the greatest practicable extent, commission
23 management decisions and actions affecting state-owned land may
24 not result in any net loss of any acreage available for hunting
25 opportunities that exists on July 1, 2006.

26 (5) Before January 1 of each year, the commission shall
27 submit to the chairmen of the respective wildlife committees in

28 each house an annual report containing the acreage of recreational
29 land and water managed by the commission that has undergone a
30 change in usage during the previous year.

31 **SECTION 3.** Sections 1 and 2 of this act shall be codified
32 within Chapter 5, Title 49, Mississippi Code of 1972.

33 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
34 and after July 1, 2006.