

By: Representative Eaton

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and
Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 995

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS TO
3 AUTHORIZE THE HUNTING OF DEER OVER CORN; TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-33,
4 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED
5 PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

10 (a) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the Friday
11 prior to Thanksgiving.

12 (b) With guns and with dogs: From the Saturday prior
13 to Thanksgiving through December 1.

14 (c) With primitive weapons and without dogs: December
15 2 through December 15.

16 (d) With guns and without dogs: December 16 through
17 December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting statewide
18 or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may designate
19 without dogs after the end of the last season for hunting deer
20 with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal designated
21 weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond January 31.

22 (e) The commission shall establish an extended season
23 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from
24 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway
25 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any
26 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this
27 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For
28 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer

29 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside
30 spread of ten (10) inches or a minimum main beam length of
31 thirteen (13) inches. The commission may delay the opening date
32 and change the length of bow and arrow season in paragraph (1)(a)
33 in this area.

34 (f) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through a
35 date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of
36 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when
37 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns
38 and with dogs in paragraph (b).

39 (2) The commission may set and regulate the deer seasons on
40 wildlife management areas which it administers.

41 (3) (a) The commission may allow the harvesting of
42 antlerless deer in the districts or zones upon the recommendation
43 of the executive director based upon good and substantial
44 quantitative data and research evaluations that demonstrate that
45 the harvesting is necessary to properly manage the herd.

46 (b) The commission, only upon the recommendation of the
47 executive director, may allow the harvesting of antlerless deer
48 during the deer season with guns and with dogs by a majority vote
49 of the commission.

50 (c) Nothing in this subsection prohibits the harvesting
51 of either-sex deer by landowners or leaseholders on private lands
52 under a deer management program prescribed or approved by the
53 executive director.

54 (4) The commission may provide a special permit for the
55 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.
56 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the
57 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may
58 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who
59 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem
60 wildlife.

61 (5) The commission, by rule or regulation, shall authorize
62 the hunting of deer over corn during any deer hunting season
63 whether the corn is scattered on the ground or is on the ear.

64 **SECTION 2.** Section 49-7-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
65 amended as follows:

66 49-7-33. (1) Except as otherwise provided in Section
67 49-7-31, it is unlawful to hunt, trap or kill any wild bird or
68 wild animal of any kind with the aid of bait, recordings of bird
69 or animal calls, or electrically amplified imitations of calls of
70 any kind, except a person:

71 (a) May use electrically amplified sound devices for
72 hunting coyote and crow;

73 (b) May use liquid scents for any animal or bird; and

74 (c) May use lures for trapping furbearing animals,
75 beaver, coyote, fox and nutria according to regulations adopted by
76 the commission.

77 (2) The commission, in its discretion, may relax the
78 restrictions regarding the use of lures or sound devices if a
79 condition arises or exists, as decided by the State Board of
80 Health or county board of health, that may endanger persons or
81 livestock in a certain community, county or area.

82 (3) A person may use bait to trap wild hogs as defined in
83 Section 49-7-140 during the period between the end of Spring
84 turkey season and the beginning of deer season with bow and arrow.

85 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
86 and after July 1, 2006.