

By: Senator(s) Posey

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and
Parks

SENATE BILL NO. 2768

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 AUTHORIZE THE HARVESTING OF DOE WITH ANY LEGAL WEAPON DURING ANY
3 OPEN DEER SEASON ON PRIVATE LANDS UNDER THE DEER MANAGEMENT
4 ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

8 49-7-31. (1) The open season on deer shall be as follows:

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

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

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

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

21 (e) The commission shall establish an extended season
22 with primitive weapons and bow and arrow without dogs from
23 February 1 through February 15 for the area south of U.S. Highway
24 84 and east of Mississippi Highway 35 only for legal bucks. Any
25 antlered deer taken in this area during any open season under this
26 section must be a legal buck as defined in this paragraph. For
27 purposes of this paragraph, the term "legal buck" means a deer
28 with antlers of four (4) points or more with a minimum inside

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

60 (5) The commission may provide for a special permit for the
61 harvesting of antlerless deer with any legal weapon during any

62 open deer season on private lands under the deer management
63 assistance program. The owner or leaseholder of private lands
64 under a deer management assistance program must apply for the
65 permit and written recommendation from a program biologist must
66 accompany the request.

67 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
68 and after July 1, 2006.