

By: Representative Fleming

To: Transportation;  
Universities and Colleges

## HOUSE BILL NO. 412

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI ENGINEERS OF THE 21ST  
2 CENTURY SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR ELIGIBLE JUNIOR AND SENIOR  
3 ENGINEERING MAJORS WHO AGREE TO WORK WITH THE MISSISSIPPI  
4 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPON GRADUATION FOR THREE YEARS; TO  
5 PROVIDE THAT SCHOLARSHIPS SHALL COVER THE COST OF TUITION AT A  
6 STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN MISSISSIPPI; TO REQUIRE  
7 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS TO DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL NEED; TO REQUIRE  
8 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE BOARD OF  
9 TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING; TO REQUIRE THE  
10 BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO PROMULGATE RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATING TO  
11 THE FUND AND TO ADMINISTER THE FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

13 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi Engineers  
14 of the 21st Century Scholarship Fund. The fund shall consist of  
15 all monies appropriated to the fund by the Legislature and any  
16 gifts, grants or donations that may be received from any source,  
17 public or private. Monies in the fund may be used solely for the  
18 purpose of awarding scholarships under this section. Interest  
19 earned on the investment of monies in the fund must be returned  
20 and deposited to the credit of the fund.

21 (2) A student enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an  
22 engineering program at a state institution of higher learning in  
23 Mississippi who is classified as a junior or senior by the  
24 registrar of the applicable institution may apply for a  
25 scholarship under this program.

26 (3) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher  
27 Learning shall establish the maximum annual award that may be made  
28 under the scholarship program, which may not exceed the cost of  
29 tuition at the state institution of higher learning at which the  
30 student is enrolled. Students classified as juniors may receive a  
31 maximum of two (2) annual awards or, in those instances when a

32 degree program requires five (5) years for completion, three (3)  
33 annual awards. Students classified as seniors may receive one (1)  
34 annual award or, in those instances when a degree program requires  
35 five (5) years for completion, two (2) annual awards.

36 (4) In order to be eligible for a scholarship, a student  
37 must be found to be in financial need. An applicant is in  
38 financial need if:

39 (a) The two-year average annual adjusted gross income  
40 of the applicant's family is less than Thirty-six Thousand Five  
41 Hundred Dollars (\$36,500.00); or

42 (b) The two-year average annual adjusted gross income  
43 of the applicant's family is less than Thirty-six Thousand Five  
44 Hundred Dollars (\$36,500.00) plus Five Thousand Dollars  
45 (\$5,000.00) for each child, other than the applicant, who is not  
46 emancipated.

47 The two-year average annual adjusted gross income of the  
48 family must be verified by Internal Revenue Service returns or by  
49 certified affidavits in cases of income that cannot be verified by  
50 such returns.

51 As used in this subsection, the term "family" for an  
52 applicant who is not emancipated means the applicant, the  
53 applicant's parents and other children of the applicant's parents  
54 under the age of twenty-one (21) years. The term "family" for an  
55 emancipated applicant means the applicant, an applicant's spouse  
56 and any children of the applicant under the age of twenty-one (21)  
57 years.

58 (5) Before being granted a scholarship, each eligible  
59 applicant must enter into a contract with the board of trustees,  
60 which shall be deemed a contract with the State of Mississippi,  
61 agreeing to the terms and conditions upon which the scholarship  
62 will be granted. In order to receive a scholarship under this  
63 program, the recipient must agree in the contract to be employed  
64 with the Mississippi Department of Transportation for a period of

65 no less than three (3) years after completing a baccalaureate  
66 degree with a major in engineering.

67 (6) As a condition for renewal of a scholarship, a student  
68 must make steady academic progress toward a baccalaureate degree  
69 with a major in engineering, as certified by the institution's  
70 registrar, and must maintain a cumulative grade point average of  
71 at least 3.00 calculated on a 4.00 scale at the end of each term.

72 (7) If a scholarship recipient does not complete a  
73 baccalaureate degree with a major in engineering or fails to be  
74 employed with the Mississippi Department of Transportation for a  
75 period of three (3) years, the full amount that the recipient  
76 received under the scholarship shall be due and payable, together  
77 with interest at the current Stafford Loan rate when the breach  
78 occurs, to the board of trustees.

79 (8) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher  
80 Learning shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry  
81 out the purposes and intent of this section. The Board of  
82 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall be the  
83 administering agency of the program.

84 (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to fully fund  
85 scholarships to eligible students under this program. If funds  
86 are insufficient to fully fund scholarships to all eligible  
87 applicants, the board shall award the scholarships to students  
88 working toward their first degree on a first-come, first-served  
89 basis; however, priority consideration must be given to persons  
90 previously receiving scholarships under the program who are making  
91 steady academic progress toward completion of a baccalaureate  
92 degree with a major in engineering.

93 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
94 and after July 1, 2007.