

By: Representative Reynolds

To: Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 967

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 25-15-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE THAT THE STATE AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES HEALTH INSURANCE
3 MANAGEMENT BOARD SHALL NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY
4 OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER TO PROVIDE THAT THE MEDICAL CENTER
5 SHALL ACCEPT AS FULL PAYMENT THE AMOUNT PAID TO IT BY THE STATE
6 AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN FOR A STATE EMPLOYEE
7 WITH A CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** Section 25-15-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
10 amended as follows:

11 **[Through June 30 of the year in which Section 25-11-143**
12 **becomes effective as provided in subsection (1) of Section**
13 **25-11-143, this section shall read as follows:]**

14 25-15-9. (1) (a) The board shall design a plan of health
15 insurance for state employees which provides benefits for
16 semiprivate rooms in addition to other incidental coverages which
17 the board deems necessary. The amount of the coverages shall be
18 in such reasonable amount as may be determined by the board to be
19 adequate, after due consideration of current health costs in
20 Mississippi. The plan shall also include major medical benefits
21 in such amounts as the board shall determine. The board shall
22 negotiate an agreement with the University of Mississippi Medical
23 Center in accordance with Section 37-115-31 to provide (i) that
24 the University of Mississippi Medical Center shall accept as full
25 payment the amount paid by the plan for a state employee who is a
26 participant in the plan and who received services from the
27 University of Mississippi Medical Center for a catastrophic
28 illness; and (ii) that there shall be no direct billing by the
29 University of Mississippi Medical Center to such state employee.

30 The board is also authorized to accept bids for such alternate
31 coverage and optional benefits as the board shall deem proper.
32 Any contract for alternative coverage and optional benefits shall
33 be awarded by the board after it has carefully studied and
34 evaluated the bids and selected the best and most cost-effective
35 bid. The board may reject all such bids; however, the board shall
36 notify all bidders of the rejection and shall actively solicit new
37 bids if all bids are rejected. The board may employ or contract
38 for such consulting or actuarial services as may be necessary to
39 formulate the plan, and to assist the board in the preparation of
40 specifications and in the process of advertising for the bids for
41 the plan. Such contracts shall be solicited and entered into in
42 accordance with Section 25-15-5. The board shall keep a record of
43 all persons, agents and corporations who contract with or assist
44 the board in preparing and developing the plan. The board in a
45 timely manner shall provide copies of this record to the members
46 of the advisory council created in this section and those
47 legislators, or their designees, who may attend meetings of the
48 advisory council. The board shall provide copies of this record
49 in the solicitation of bids for the administration or servicing of
50 the self-insured program. Each person, agent or corporation
51 which, during the previous fiscal year, has assisted in the
52 development of the plan or employed or compensated any person who
53 assisted in the development of the plan, and which bids on the
54 administration or servicing of the plan, shall submit to the board
55 a statement accompanying the bid explaining in detail its
56 participation with the development of the plan. This statement
57 shall include the amount of compensation paid by the bidder to any
58 such employee during the previous fiscal year. The board shall
59 make all such information available to the members of the advisory
60 council and those legislators, or their designees, who may attend
61 meetings of the advisory council before any action is taken by the
62 board on the bids submitted. The failure of any bidder to fully

63 and accurately comply with this paragraph shall result in the
64 rejection of any bid submitted by that bidder or the cancellation
65 of any contract executed when the failure is discovered after the
66 acceptance of that bid. The board is authorized to promulgate
67 rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this
68 subsection.

69 The board shall develop plans for the insurance plan
70 authorized by this section in accordance with the provisions of
71 Section 25-15-5.

72 Any corporation, association, company or individual that
73 contracts with the board for the third-party claims administration
74 of the self-insured plan shall prepare and keep on file an
75 explanation of benefits for each claim processed. The explanation
76 of benefits shall contain such information relative to each
77 processed claim which the board deems necessary, and, at a
78 minimum, each explanation shall provide the claimant's name, claim
79 number, provider number, provider name, service dates, type of
80 services, amount of charges, amount allowed to the claimant and
81 reason codes. The information contained in the explanation of
82 benefits shall be available for inspection upon request by the
83 board. The board shall have access to all claims information
84 utilized in the issuance of payments to employees and providers.

85 (b) There is created an advisory council to advise the
86 board in the formulation of the State and School Employees Health
87 Insurance Plan. The council shall be composed of the State
88 Insurance Commissioner or his designee, an employee-representative
89 of the institutions of higher learning appointed by the board of
90 trustees thereof, an employee-representative of the Department of
91 Transportation appointed by the director thereof, an
92 employee-representative of the State Tax Commission appointed by
93 the Commissioner of Revenue, an employee-representative of the
94 Mississippi Department of Health appointed by the State Health
95 Officer, an employee-representative of the Mississippi Department

96 of Corrections appointed by the Commissioner of Corrections, and
97 an employee-representative of the Department of Human Services
98 appointed by the Executive Director of Human Services, two (2)
99 certificated public school administrators appointed by the State
100 Board of Education, two (2) certificated classroom teachers
101 appointed by the State Board of Education, a noncertificated
102 school employee appointed by the State Board of Education and a
103 community/junior college employee appointed by the State Board for
104 Community and Junior Colleges.

105 The Lieutenant Governor may designate the Secretary of the
106 Senate, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the
107 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the
108 Senate Insurance Committee, and the Speaker of the House of
109 Representatives may designate the Clerk of the House, the Chairman
110 of the House Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House
111 Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Insurance
112 Committee, to attend any meeting of the State and School Employees
113 Insurance Advisory Council. The appointing authorities may
114 designate an alternate member from their respective houses to
115 serve when the regular designee is unable to attend such meetings
116 of the council. Such designees shall have no jurisdiction or vote
117 on any matter within the jurisdiction of the council. For
118 attending meetings of the council, such legislators shall receive
119 per diem and expenses which shall be paid from the contingent
120 expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts as
121 provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in
122 session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending meetings
123 of the council will be paid while the Legislature is in session.
124 No per diem and expenses will be paid except for attending
125 meetings of the council without prior approval of the proper
126 committee in their respective houses.

127 (c) No change in the terms of the State and School
128 Employees Health Insurance Plan may be made effective unless the

129 board, or its designee, has provided notice to the State and
130 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council and has called
131 a meeting of the council at least fifteen (15) days before the
132 effective date of such change. In the event that the State and
133 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council does not meet
134 to advise the board on the proposed changes, the changes to the
135 plan shall become effective at such time as the board has informed
136 the council that the changes shall become effective.

137 (d) **Medical benefits for retired employees and**
138 **dependents under age sixty-five (65) years and not eligible for**
139 **Medicare benefits.** For employees who retire before July 1, 2005,
140 and for employees retiring due to work-related disability under
141 the Public Employees' Retirement System, the same health insurance
142 coverage as for all other active employees and their dependents
143 shall be available to retired employees and all dependents under
144 age sixty-five (65) years who are not eligible for Medicare
145 benefits, the level of benefits to be the same level as for all
146 other active participants. For employees who retire on or after
147 July 1, 2005, and not retiring due to work-related disability
148 under the Public Employees' Retirement System, the same health
149 insurance coverage as for all other active employees and their
150 dependents shall be available to such retiring employees and all
151 dependents under age sixty-five (65) years who are not eligible
152 for Medicare benefits only if the retiring employees were
153 participants in the State and School Employees Health Insurance
154 Plan for four (4) years or more before their retirement, the level
155 of benefits to be the same level as for all other active
156 participants. This section will apply to those employees who
157 retire due to one hundred percent (100%) medical disability as
158 well as those employees electing early retirement.

159 (e) **Medical benefits for retired employees and**
160 **dependents over age sixty-five (65) years or otherwise eligible**
161 **for Medicare benefits.** For employees who retire before July 1,

162 2005, and for employees retiring due to work-related disability
163 under the Public Employees' Retirement System, the health
164 insurance coverage available to retired employees over age
165 sixty-five (65) years or otherwise eligible for Medicare benefits,
166 and all dependents over age sixty-five (65) years or otherwise
167 eligible for Medicare benefits, shall be the major medical
168 coverage with the lifetime maximum of One Million Dollars
169 (\$1,000,000.00). For employees retiring on or after July 1, 2005,
170 and not retiring due to work-related disability under the Public
171 Employees' Retirement System, the health insurance coverage
172 described herein shall be available to such retiring employees
173 only if they were participants in the State and School Employees
174 Health Insurance Plan for four (4) years or more and are over age
175 sixty-five (65) years or otherwise eligible for Medicare benefits,
176 and to all dependents over age sixty-five (65) years or otherwise
177 eligible for Medicare benefits. Benefits shall be reduced by
178 Medicare benefits as though such Medicare benefits were the base
179 plan.

180 All covered individuals shall be assumed to have full
181 Medicare coverage, Parts A and B; and any Medicare payments under
182 both Parts A and B shall be computed to reduce benefits payable
183 under this plan.

184 (2) Nonduplication of benefits--reduction of benefits by
185 Title XIX benefits: When benefits would be payable under more
186 than one (1) group plan, benefits under those plans will be
187 coordinated to the extent that the total benefits under all plans
188 will not exceed the total expenses incurred.

189 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall
190 be reduced by any similar benefits payable in accordance with
191 Title XIX of the Social Security Act or under any amendments
192 thereto, or any implementing legislation.

193 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall
194 be reduced by any similar benefits payable by workers'
195 compensation.

196 (3) (a) Schedule of life insurance benefits--group term:
197 The amount of term life insurance for each active employee of a
198 department, agency or institution of the state government shall
199 not be in excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or
200 twice the amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest
201 One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no
202 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like
203 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a
204 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium
205 waiver provision if a covered employee becomes totally and
206 permanently disabled prior to age sixty-five (65) years.
207 Employees retiring after June 30, 1999, shall be eligible to
208 continue life insurance coverage in an amount of Five Thousand
209 Dollars (\$5,000.00), Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) or Twenty
210 Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) into retirement.

211 (b) Effective October 1, 1999, schedule of life
212 insurance benefits--group term: The amount of term life insurance
213 for each active employee of any school district, community/junior
214 college, public library or university-based program authorized
215 under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and emotionally disturbed
216 children or any regular nonstudent bus driver shall not be in
217 excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or twice the
218 amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest One
219 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no
220 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like
221 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a
222 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium
223 waiver provision if a covered employee of any school district,
224 community/junior college, public library or university-based
225 program authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and

226 emotionally disturbed children or any regular nonstudent bus
227 driver becomes totally and permanently disabled prior to age
228 sixty-five (65) years. Employees of any school district,
229 community/junior college, public library or university-based
230 program authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and
231 emotionally disturbed children or any regular nonstudent bus
232 driver retiring after September 30, 1999, shall be eligible to
233 continue life insurance coverage in an amount of Five Thousand
234 Dollars (\$5,000.00), Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) or Twenty
235 Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) into retirement.

236 (4) Any eligible employee who on March 1, 1971, was
237 participating in a group life insurance program which has
238 provisions different from those included herein and for which the
239 State of Mississippi was paying a part of the premium may, at his
240 discretion, continue to participate in such plan. Such employee
241 shall pay in full all additional costs, if any, above the minimum
242 program established by this article. Under no circumstances shall
243 any individual who begins employment with the state after March 1,
244 1971, be eligible for the provisions of this subsection.

245 (5) The board may offer medical savings accounts as defined
246 in Section 71-9-3 as a plan option.

247 (6) Any premium differentials, differences in coverages,
248 discounts determined by risk or by any other factors shall be
249 uniformly applied to all active employees participating in the
250 insurance plan. It is the intent of the Legislature that the
251 state contribution to the plan be the same for each employee
252 throughout the state.

253 (7) On October 1, 1999, any school district,
254 community/junior college district or public library may elect to
255 remain with an existing policy or policies of group life insurance
256 with an insurance company approved by the State and School
257 Employees Health Insurance Management Board, in lieu of
258 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. On or

259 after July 1, 2004, until October 1, 2004, any school district,
260 community/junior college district or public library may elect to
261 choose a policy or policies of group life insurance existing on
262 October 1, 1999, with an insurance company approved by the State
263 and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board in lieu of
264 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. The
265 state's contribution of up to fifty percent (50%) of the active
266 employee's premium under the State and School Life Insurance Plan
267 may be applied toward the cost of coverage for full-time employees
268 participating in the approved life insurance company group plan.
269 For purposes of this subsection (7), "life insurance company group
270 plan" means a plan administered or sold by a private insurance
271 company. After October 1, 1999, the board may assess charges in
272 addition to the existing State and School Life Insurance Plan
273 rates to such employees as a condition of enrollment in the State
274 and School Life Insurance Plan. In order for any life insurance
275 company group plan to be approved by the State and School
276 Employees Health Insurance Management Board under this subsection
277 (7), it shall meet the following criteria:

278 (a) The insurance company offering the group life
279 insurance plan shall be rated "A-" or better by A.M. Best state
280 insurance rating service and be licensed as an admitted carrier in
281 the State of Mississippi by the Mississippi Department of
282 Insurance.

283 (b) The insurance company group life insurance plan
284 shall provide the same life insurance, accidental death and
285 dismemberment insurance and waiver of premium benefits as provided
286 in the State and School Life Insurance Plan.

287 (c) The insurance company group life insurance plan
288 shall be fully insured, and no form of self-funding life insurance
289 by such company shall be approved.

290 (d) The insurance company group life insurance plan
291 shall have one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars

292 (\$1,000.00) of coverage for active employees regardless of age and
293 one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) of
294 coverage for all retirees regardless of age or type of retiree.

295 (e) The insurance company and its group life insurance
296 plan shall comply with any administrative requirements of the
297 State and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board. In
298 the event any insurance company providing group life insurance
299 benefits to employees under this subsection (7) fails to comply
300 with any requirements specified herein or any administrative
301 requirements of the board, the state shall discontinue providing
302 funding for the cost of such insurance.

303 **[From and after July 1 of the year in which Section 25-11-143**
304 **becomes effective as provided in subsection (1) of Section**
305 **25-11-143, this section shall read as follows:]**

306 25-15-9. (1) (a) The board shall design a plan of health
307 insurance for state employees that provides benefits for
308 semiprivate rooms in addition to other incidental coverages that
309 the board deems necessary. The amount of the coverages shall be
310 in such reasonable amount as may be determined by the board to be
311 adequate, after due consideration of current health costs in
312 Mississippi. The plan shall also include major medical benefits
313 in such amounts as the board shall determine. The board shall
314 negotiate an agreement with the University of Mississippi Medical
315 Center in accordance with Section 37-115-31 to provide (i) that
316 the University of Mississippi Medical Center shall accept as full
317 payment the amount paid by the plan for a state employee who is a
318 participant in the plan and who received services from the
319 University of Mississippi Medical Center for a catastrophic
320 illness; and (ii) that there shall be no direct billing by the
321 University of Mississippi Medical Center to such state employee.

322 The board is also authorized to accept bids for such alternate
323 coverage and optional benefits as the board deems proper. Any
324 contract for alternative coverage and optional benefits shall be

325 awarded by the board after it has carefully studied and evaluated
326 the bids and selected the best and most cost-effective bid. The
327 board may reject all such bids; however, the board shall notify
328 all bidders of the rejection and shall actively solicit new bids
329 if all bids are rejected. The board may employ or contract for
330 such consulting or actuarial services as may be necessary to
331 formulate the plan, and to assist the board in the preparation of
332 specifications and in the process of advertising for the bids for
333 the plan. Those contracts shall be solicited and entered into in
334 accordance with Section 25-15-5. The board shall keep a record of
335 all persons, agents and corporations who contract with or assist
336 the board in preparing and developing the plan. The board in a
337 timely manner shall provide copies of this record to the members
338 of the advisory council created in this section and those
339 legislators, or their designees, who may attend meetings of the
340 advisory council. The board shall provide copies of this record
341 in the solicitation of bids for the administration or servicing of
342 the self-insured program. Each person, agent or corporation that,
343 during the previous fiscal year, has assisted in the development
344 of the plan or employed or compensated any person who assisted in
345 the development of the plan, and that bids on the administration
346 or servicing of the plan, shall submit to the board a statement
347 accompanying the bid explaining in detail its participation with
348 the development of the plan. This statement shall include the
349 amount of compensation paid by the bidder to any such employee
350 during the previous fiscal year. The board shall make all such
351 information available to the members of the advisory council and
352 those legislators, or their designees, who may attend meetings of
353 the advisory council before any action is taken by the board on
354 the bids submitted. The failure of any bidder to fully and
355 accurately comply with this paragraph shall result in the
356 rejection of any bid submitted by that bidder or the cancellation
357 of any contract executed when the failure is discovered after the

358 acceptance of that bid. The board is authorized to promulgate
359 rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this
360 subsection.

361 The board shall develop plans for the insurance plan
362 authorized by this section in accordance with the provisions of
363 Section 25-15-5.

364 Any corporation, association, company or individual that
365 contracts with the board for the third-party claims administration
366 of the self-insured plan shall prepare and keep on file an
367 explanation of benefits for each claim processed. The explanation
368 of benefits shall contain such information relative to each
369 processed claim which the board deems necessary, and, at a
370 minimum, each explanation shall provide the claimant's name, claim
371 number, provider number, provider name, service dates, type of
372 services, amount of charges, amount allowed to the claimant and
373 reason codes. The information contained in the explanation of
374 benefits shall be available for inspection upon request by the
375 board. The board shall have access to all claims information
376 utilized in the issuance of payments to employees and providers.

377 (b) There is created an advisory council to advise the
378 board in the formulation of the State and School Employees Health
379 Insurance Plan. The council shall be composed of the State
380 Insurance Commissioner or his designee, an employee-representative
381 of the state institutions of higher learning appointed by the
382 board of trustees thereof, an employee-representative of the
383 Mississippi Department of Transportation appointed by the director
384 thereof, an employee-representative of the State Tax Commission
385 appointed by the Commissioner of Revenue, an
386 employee-representative of the State Department of Health
387 appointed by the State Health Officer, an employee-representative
388 of the Mississippi Department of Corrections appointed by the
389 Commissioner of Corrections, and an employee-representative of the
390 Mississippi Department of Human Services appointed by the

391 Executive Director of Human Services, two (2) certificated public
392 school administrators appointed by the State Board of Education,
393 two (2) certificated classroom teachers appointed by the State
394 Board of Education, a noncertificated school employee appointed by
395 the State Board of Education and a community/junior college
396 employee appointed by the State Board for Community and Junior
397 Colleges.

398 The Lieutenant Governor may designate the Secretary of the
399 Senate, the Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the
400 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Chairman of the
401 Senate Insurance Committee, and the Speaker of the House of
402 Representatives may designate the Clerk of the House, the Chairman
403 of the House Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the House
404 Education Committee and the Chairman of the House Insurance
405 Committee, to attend any meeting of the State and School Employees
406 Insurance Advisory Council. The appointing authorities may
407 designate an alternate member from their respective houses to
408 serve when the regular designee is unable to attend such meetings
409 of the council. Those designees shall have no jurisdiction or
410 vote on any matter within the jurisdiction of the council. For
411 attending meetings of the council, those legislators shall receive
412 per diem and expenses, which shall be paid from the contingent
413 expense funds of their respective houses in the same amounts as
414 provided for committee meetings when the Legislature is not in
415 session; however, no per diem and expenses for attending meetings
416 of the council will be paid while the Legislature is in session.
417 No per diem and expenses will be paid except for attending
418 meetings of the council without prior approval of the proper
419 committee in their respective houses.

420 (c) No change in the terms of the State and School
421 Employees Health Insurance Plan may be made effective unless the
422 board, or its designee, has provided notice to the State and
423 School Employees Health Insurance Advisory Council and has called

424 a meeting of the council at least fifteen (15) days before the
425 effective date of the change. If the State and School Employees
426 Health Insurance Advisory Council does not meet to advise the
427 board on the proposed changes, the changes to the plan will become
428 effective at such time as the board has informed the council that
429 the changes will become effective.

430 (2) Nonduplication of benefits--reduction of benefits by
431 Title XIX benefits: When benefits would be payable under more
432 than one (1) group plan, benefits under those plans will be
433 coordinated to the extent that the total benefits under all plans
434 will not exceed the total expenses incurred.

435 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall
436 be reduced by any similar benefits payable in accordance with
437 Title XIX of the Social Security Act or under any amendments
438 thereto, or any implementing legislation.

439 Benefits for hospital or surgical or medical benefits shall
440 be reduced by any similar benefits payable by workers'
441 compensation.

442 (3) (a) Schedule of life insurance benefits--group term:
443 The amount of term life insurance for each active employee of a
444 department, agency or institution of the state government shall
445 not be in excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or
446 twice the amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest
447 One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no
448 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like
449 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a
450 twenty-four-hour basis.

451 (b) Effective October 1, 1999, schedule of life
452 insurance benefits--group term: The amount of term life insurance
453 for each active employee of any school district, community/junior
454 college, public library, university-based program authorized under
455 Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and emotionally disturbed
456 children, or any regular nonstudent bus driver shall not be in

457 excess of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), or twice the
458 amount of the employee's annual wage to the next highest One
459 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), whichever may be less, but in no
460 case less than Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00), with a like
461 amount for accidental death and dismemberment on a
462 twenty-four-hour basis. The plan will further contain a premium
463 waiver provision if a covered employee of any school district,
464 community/junior college, public library, university-based program
465 authorized under Section 37-23-31 for deaf, aphasic and
466 emotionally disturbed children, or any regular nonstudent bus
467 driver becomes totally and permanently disabled before age
468 sixty-five (65) years.

469 (4) Any eligible employee who on March 1, 1971, was
470 participating in a group life insurance program that has
471 provisions different from those included in this section and for
472 which the State of Mississippi was paying a part of the premium
473 may, at his discretion, continue to participate in that plan. The
474 employee shall pay in full all additional costs, if any, above the
475 minimum program established by this article. Under no
476 circumstances shall any individual who begins employment with the
477 state after March 1, 1971, be eligible for the provisions of this
478 subsection.

479 (5) The board may offer medical savings accounts as defined
480 in Section 71-9-3 as a plan option.

481 (6) Any premium differentials, differences in coverages,
482 discounts determined by risk or by any other factors shall be
483 uniformly applied to all active employees participating in the
484 insurance plan. It is the intent of the Legislature that the
485 state contribution to the plan be the same for each employee
486 throughout the state.

487 (7) On October 1, 1999, any school district,
488 community/junior college district or public library may elect to
489 remain with an existing policy or policies of group life insurance

490 with an insurance company approved by the State and School
491 Employees Health Insurance Management Board, in lieu of
492 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. On or
493 after July 1, 2004, until October 1, 2004, any school district,
494 community/junior college district or public library may elect to
495 choose a policy or policies of group life insurance existing on
496 October 1, 1999, with an insurance company approved by the State
497 and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board in lieu of
498 participation in the State and School Life Insurance Plan. The
499 state's contribution of up to fifty percent (50%) of the active
500 employee's premium under the State and School Life Insurance Plan
501 may be applied toward the cost of coverage for full-time employees
502 participating in the approved life insurance company group plan.
503 For purposes of this subsection (7), "life insurance company group
504 plan" means a plan administered or sold by a private insurance
505 company. After October 1, 1999, the board may assess charges in
506 addition to the existing State and School Life Insurance Plan
507 rates to those employees as a condition of enrollment in the State
508 and School Life Insurance Plan. In order for any life insurance
509 company group plan to be approved by the State and School
510 Employees Health Insurance Management Board under this subsection
511 (7), it shall meet the following criteria:

512 (a) The insurance company offering the group life
513 insurance plan shall be rated "A-" or better by A.M. Best state
514 insurance rating service and be licensed as an admitted carrier in
515 the State of Mississippi by the Mississippi Department of
516 Insurance.

517 (b) The insurance company group life insurance plan
518 shall provide the same life insurance, accidental death and
519 dismemberment insurance and waiver of premium benefits as provided
520 in the State and School Life Insurance Plan.

521 (c) The insurance company group life insurance plan
522 shall be fully insured, and no form of self-funding life insurance
523 by such company shall be approved.

524 (d) The insurance company group life insurance plan
525 shall have one (1) composite rate per One Thousand Dollars
526 (\$1,000.00) of coverage for active employees regardless of age.

527 (e) The insurance company and its group life insurance
528 plan shall comply with any administrative requirements of the
529 State and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board. If
530 any insurance company providing group life insurance benefits to
531 employees under this subsection (7) fails to comply with any
532 requirements specified in this subsection or any administrative
533 requirements of the board, the state shall discontinue providing
534 funding for the cost of that insurance.

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