

By: Representatives Dickson, Cockerham,
Ellis, Fredericks, Holloway, Myers, Perkins

To: Public Health and Human
Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 1203

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A JOINT LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMITTEE TO
2 ADDRESS CHILDREN AND FAMILY ISSUES, THE CREATION OF A YOUTH
3 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, THE CREATION OF SMALL GROUP HOMES AND
4 COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENTING A STATEWIDE YOUTH
5 ADVISORY COUNCIL; TO REQUIRE A REPORT TO THE 2008 REGULAR SESSION
6 OF THE LEGISLATURE; TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON ALL FAMILY AND
7 CHILDREN'S ISSUES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created joint legislative study
10 committee to establish measurable goals and benchmarks for the
11 State of Mississippi relating to children and family issues. The
12 committee shall make recommendations on all aspects of family
13 services with an emphasis on government assistance, child care,
14 promoting educational enhancement, unemployment, youth involvement
15 and crime deterrence, crisis intervention and reducing disparities
16 in education, income and availability of health care. The
17 committee shall, at a minimum, study and report to the 2008
18 Regular Session of the Legislature on the following:

19 (a) Develop initiatives to combat juvenile disciplinary
20 problems;

21 (b) Gather information about current funding and
22 services for children's services, by creating a children's budget
23 and a report card to provide a comprehensive glance of total
24 funding by age and level and type of services provided;

25 (c) Coordinate funds and programs to minimize
26 duplication and maximize the return on investments in children and
27 youth programs;

28 (d) Develop "a positive youth development approach"
29 that sets clear direction and provides a vision for policymakers;

30 (e) Create small group homes and community-based
31 programs aimed at shutting down and phasing out large juvenile
32 institutions;

33 (f) Create one (1) group home in each congressional
34 district; and

35 (g) Create a statewide youth advisory council, to get
36 youth involved in the government process and community
37 involvement.

38 The joint committee shall make a report of its findings and
39 recommendations to the Legislature by January 1, 2008, including
40 any recommended legislation.

41 (2) The joint committee shall be composed of the following
42 eleven (11) members:

43 (a) The Vice Chairman of the House Public Health and
44 Human Services Committee and the Vice Chairman of the Senate
45 Public Health and Welfare Committee;

46 (b) Two (2) senators to be appointed by the Lieutenant
47 Governor;

48 (c) Two (2) representatives to be appointed by the
49 Speaker of the House; and

50 (d) Five (5) members to be appointed by the Governor of
51 the State of Mississippi, who shall consist of state health agency
52 heads, executive directors and other health-related officials.

53 (3) Appointments shall be made within thirty (30) days after
54 the effective date of this act. The joint committee shall hold
55 its first meeting before August 1, 2007. The Vice Chairman of the
56 House Public Health and Human Services Committee and the Vice
57 Chairman of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee shall
58 serve as cochairmen of the committee.

59 (4) A majority of the members of the committee shall
60 constitute a quorum. In the adoption of the rules, resolutions
61 and reports, an affirmative vote of a majority of the members
62 shall be required. All members shall be notified in writing of

63 all meetings, such notices shall be mailed at least five (5) days
64 prior to the date on which a meeting is to be held.

65 (5) Members of the committee shall receive the customary per
66 diem compensation, expense reimbursement and mileage for attending
67 committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session.

68 (6) The committee is authorized to accept funds from any
69 source, public or private, to be expended in the implementing its
70 duties under this section.

71 (7) To effectuate the purposes of this section, any
72 department, division, board, bureau, committee or agency of the
73 state or any political subdivision thereof, shall, at the request
74 of the cochairmen of the committee, provide such facilities,
75 assistance and data as will enable the committee to properly carry
76 out its duties.

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