

By: Senator(s) Jordan, Jackson (11th),
Thomas, Clarke, Walls, Simmons, Dawkins

To: Economic Development and
Tourism; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2849

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE DELTA REGIONAL HOUSING CLEARINGHOUSE TO
2 SERVE AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON THE NUMEROUS PROJECTS AIMED AT
3 IMPROVING HOUSING IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA REGION BY VARIOUS
4 AGENCIES AND ENTITIES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE CLEARINGHOUSE SHALL BE
5 GOVERNED BY A BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
6 CERTAIN COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES AND TO PRESCRIBE THE BOARD'S
7 DUTIES; TO REQUIRE THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO
8 ALLOCATE STATE FUNDS TO QUALIFIED COMMUNITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
9 ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DELTA REGION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
10 SUPPORT OF HOUSING PROJECTS; TO REQUIRE THE LEGISLATURE TO
11 ANNUALLY APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT
12 AUTHORITY FOR SUCH PURPOSES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

14 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature finds that the Mississippi
15 Delta region faces a critical housing crisis in that a large
16 number of the region's residents live in substandard housing,
17 which negatively affects the economy, environment and individual
18 citizens who cannot afford better housing. The Legislature
19 further finds that there is a correlation between the increasing
20 number of low-income families in the Delta region who are forced
21 to move and change schools numerous times each year with low
22 student achievement, and that this correlation substantiates the
23 compelling and urgent need to improve the quality of housing in
24 the Delta region for those families.

25 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that this act
26 establish a means to begin improving the negative housing
27 situation for low-income families in the Mississippi Delta region.

28 **SECTION 2.** For purposes of this act, the terms "Mississippi
29 Delta region," "Delta region" and "region" are defined as the
30 western section of the State of Mississippi that lies between the
31 Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers, encompassing in whole or in part the
32 counties of Bolivar, Carroll, Claiborne, Coahoma, Holmes,

33 Humphreys, Issaquena, Jefferson, Leflore, Panola, Quitman,
34 Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington and
35 Yazoo.

36 **SECTION 3.** (1) There is created a Delta Regional Housing
37 Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse shall be governed by a board of
38 directors composed of a representative of each county in the
39 region and each municipality in the region which has a population
40 greater than ten thousand (10,000) according to the latest federal
41 decennial census. The representatives of the counties and those
42 municipalities entitled to representation on the board of
43 directors will be selected by the governing authorities of the
44 respective counties and municipalities.

45 (2) The Delta Regional Housing Clearinghouse shall have the
46 following duties:

47 (a) To serve as a virtual one-stop housing center for
48 all citizens of the Delta region and to be the public coordinator
49 for public, private and foundation housing efforts in the Delta
50 region;

51 (b) To serve as a source of information on all housing
52 programs, including programs administered by federal, state and
53 local governmental agencies, private companies and foundations,
54 and to collect, disseminate and provide information on housing
55 needs, on no less than an annual basis, to citizens of the Delta
56 region;

57 (c) To promote the importance of affordable, adequate
58 housing as part of the long-term development of the Delta region;

59 (d) To conduct a Regional Housing Needs Assessment
60 (RHNA) that details growth issues and housing needs in the region
61 in order to quantify the need for housing within each political
62 subdivision in the region so that communities may plan for and
63 determine how to address the needs of their respective
64 communities;

65 (e) To prepare and disseminate annually a Delta Region
66 Housing Report that may serve as a guide to policymakers and
67 legislators on housing needs in the Delta. The report required
68 under this item must be submitted to the Governor and members of
69 the Legislature before September 1 of each year;

70 (f) To prepare a bibliography of housing redevelopment
71 resources which includes current reviews, studies and information
72 on programs and organizations that address affordable housing and
73 redevelopment issues;

74 (g) To compile a roster of housing projects in the
75 Delta region, including a description of each project, the name
76 and address of the agency involved in the project and contact
77 information for the person in charge of the project. The roster
78 must include, but not necessarily be limited to:
79 multi-generational developments serving very low-income families;
80 technical assistance for providing affordable housing; and
81 redevelopment projects; and

82 (h) To develop and maintain a resource database to
83 catalog, for the Delta region, current housing programs, local
84 governments, private lenders and foundation grants. For each
85 item, the database must specify the goals, types of funding
86 available through the item and application process for interested
87 parties.

88 **SECTION 4.** (1) In order to strengthen the local
89 revitalization efforts of the Community Housing Development
90 Organizations (CHDOs) in the Delta region, the Mississippi
91 Development Authority (MDA), subject to the availability of
92 funding appropriated specifically therefor, shall provide funding
93 to qualified CHDOs that are awarded HOME funds, as authorized
94 under Title II of the federal Cranston-Gonzalez National
95 Affordable Housing Act, as amended, for the administrative
96 operations support of housing projects. Funds made available to a

97 CHDO under this section may be used solely for administrative
98 expenses incurred in supporting the operations of the CHDO.

99 (2) In fiscal year 2008, the MDA shall allocate funds for
100 administrative operations support expenses to all qualified CHDOs
101 in the region in an amount to be determined by the MDA. In the
102 following fiscal years, funds will be awarded by the MDA as
103 incentive grants, based on the performance of each CHDO that
104 requests funding. The MDA shall develop objective performance
105 criteria to be used in determining if a CHDO is qualified for a
106 grant under this section, and if so, the amount of funding to be
107 awarded to that CHDO.

108 (3) For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this
109 section, the Legislature shall appropriate annually to the
110 Mississippi Development Authority an amount equal to one-half
111 (1/2) of the federal funds received by the state through the
112 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
113 for the administrative operations support of the HOME program.

114 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
115 and after its passage.