

By: Representative Scott

To: Education;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 569

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE
2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO
3 ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM KNOWN AS THE "HEALTH CAREERS
4 ACADEMY" FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GRADES 9 THROUGH 12; TO
5 PROVIDE THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE ACADEMY WILL BE TO STIMULATE
6 INTEREST IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, LANGUAGE ARTS, CRITICAL THINKING
7 AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS; TO REQUIRE THE ACADEMY TO BE
8 CONDUCTED AS A SIX-WEEK NONRESIDENTIAL SUMMER PROGRAM AT THE
9 UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER; TO REQUIRE THE STATE
10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE
11 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO JOINTLY DEVELOP THE CRITERIA
12 AND PROCESS TO BE USED IN A RANDOM SELECTION OF CANDIDATES; TO
13 REQUIRE THAT THE CRITERIA AND PROCESS USED BE NONDISCRIMINATORY IN
14 NATURE; TO PRESCRIBE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR
15 PARTICIPATION IN THE ACADEMY; TO PRESCRIBE THE COMPONENTS TO BE
16 INCLUDED IN THE ACADEMY; TO REQUIRE THE ACADEMY TO PROVIDE
17 FULL-DAY INSTRUCTION DURING THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE
18 PARTICIPATING STUDENTS TO COMPLETE CERTAIN TASKS AND RESEARCH
19 PROJECTS; TO LIMIT PARTICIPATION IN THE ACADEMY TO MISSISSIPPI
20 RESIDENTS IN GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 WHO ATTEND A PUBLIC SCHOOL; TO
21 REQUIRE ELIGIBLE PERSONS TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR
22 PARTICIPATION TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; TO REQUIRE THE
23 DEPARTMENT TO MAKE THE APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE TO ALL SCHOOL
24 DISTRICTS BY A CERTAIN DATE AND TO ESTABLISH THE DEADLINE FOR
25 ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO FORWARD
26 THE COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR HEALTH
27 AFFAIRS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER AT THE
28 CLOSING DATE FOR ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS; TO PROVIDE AN
29 INCENTIVE IN THE FORM OF A STIPEND FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN
30 THE ACADEMY; TO ESTABLISH THE HEALTH CAREERS ACADEMY TRUST FUND IN
31 THE STATE TREASURY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS
32 AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER FOR START-UP
33 COSTS AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING AND OPERATING THE
34 ACADEMY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.



35 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature emphasizes the
36 importance of fostering high standards for educating the state's
37 students enrolled in and attending public schools by increasing
38 efforts to prepare these students for the pursuit of continued
39 educational success and the professional careers that are obtained
40 as a result; and

41 WHEREAS, with a nationally growing demand for health care
42 professionals, the Mississippi Legislature finds it incumbent upon
43 itself to take proper measures to reduce shortages in the health
44 care profession, as these shortages directly impact the medical
45 workforce and the availability of health care throughout our
46 state; and

47 WHEREAS, with education being the fundamental building block
48 for the grooming and development of the impressionable minds of
49 our state's educable children for the educational and career paths
50 upon which they will embark, there exists a great need for the
51 implementation of a more rigorously enhanced scientific,
52 mathematic and language arts curriculum in the public school
53 setting to facilitate an increased educational capacity in health
54 care programs; and

55 WHEREAS, to accomplish the pertinent goal of producing a
56 capable and knowledgeable health care workforce, a collaborative
57 effort must be undertaken by the state's medical university and
58 research institution, the State Department of Education and local



59 school districts to afford students every reasonable opportunity
60 to explore a career in the field of health care; and

61 WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Mississippi Legislature to
62 promote the educational accountability of public schools and the
63 students educated therein through the implementation of
64 informational, analytical and research-based programs of
65 instruction to heighten public school students' awareness and
66 interests in health care professions: NOW, THEREFORE,

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

68 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year,
69 the State Department of Education, in conjunction with the Board
70 of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning acting for
71 and on behalf of the University of Mississippi Medical Center
72 (UMMC), shall establish and implement a program known as the
73 "Health Careers Academy" for public school students in Grades 9
74 through 12, the purpose of which will be to stimulate interest in
75 science, mathematics, language arts, critical thinking and the
76 health care professions, especially among underserved and
77 underrepresented populations in Mississippi, to increase awareness
78 of the urgent need for health care professionals in our state and
79 to raise ACT scores through preparatory instruction.

80 (2) The academy established under subsection (1) of this
81 section for the introduction of students to a potential career in
82 the health care professions must be a six-week nonresidential
83 summer program at UMMC, during which time students must be



84 provided onsite hands-on instruction to increase the students'
85 preparation for a premedical or allied health curriculum and to
86 strengthen academic competitiveness. The lecture-based portions
87 of instruction in the academy must be conducted by instructors
88 with adequate certification in science, mathematics and language
89 arts who are licensed by the State Department of Education or who
90 teach those subject areas at the collegiate level.

91 (3) The State Department of Education and the Board of
92 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall develop
93 jointly the criteria and process to be used in a random selection
94 of candidates to participate in the academy. The criteria and
95 process must be nondiscriminatory in nature and may not refuse
96 admission into the academy on the basis of race, color, age,
97 disability, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation
98 or prior academic achievement.

99 (4) Eligibility for participation in the academy is limited
100 to students who:

- 101 (a) Maintain a cumulative 2.25 grade point average on a
102 4.0 scale;
- 103 (b) Are recommended by their science or mathematics
104 teachers, or both;
- 105 (c) Have a consistent record of attendance;
- 106 (d) Display positive attitudes, character and
107 citizenship;



108 (e) Express a desire to expand their knowledge of
109 health care and medicine;

110 (f) Are residents of Mississippi; and

111 (g) Present proof of having health insurance or
112 Medicaid.

113 However, before any student is accepted for participation
114 under the criteria of this subsection, that student's parent,
115 legal guardian or custodian must submit written authorization
116 agreeing to the student's participation in the academy.

117 (5) The Health Careers Academy must include, but not be
118 limited to, the following components:

119 (a) An orientation, which the parents are encouraged to
120 attend;

121 (b) Classes in mathematics, science, language arts,
122 critical thinking and study skills;

123 (c) ACT instruction and practice exams;

124 (d) Instructional interaction with UMMC medical
125 students;

126 (e) Presentations from UMMC professionals;

127 (f) Health-related hands-on activities;

128 (g) CPR certification;

129 (h) A graduation ceremony; and

130 (i) ACT registration as needed.

131 (6) The Health Careers Academy must consist of a full day of
132 academic, research or laboratory instruction beginning at 8:00



133 a.m. and lasting until 3:00 p.m. daily on Monday through Friday of
134 each week during the six (6) weeks of the academy. During each
135 week, two (2) afternoons must be dedicated to ACT preparation and
136 the remaining three (3) days must be dedicated to health care
137 career preparation and volunteerism.

138 (7) Students participating in the academy must complete a
139 series of tasks designed to enhance their knowledge of the health
140 care professions and must complete a research project to be judged
141 by the faculty of UMMC.

142 **SECTION 2.** Participation in the academy must be limited to
143 Mississippi residents who are entering Grades 9 through 12 in a
144 public school and who have submitted to the State Department of
145 Education a completed application on the form designed and
146 supplied by the department and the Board of Trustees of State
147 Institutions of Higher Learning. The department shall make
148 applications available to each school district on October 1 of
149 each year and shall establish the deadline for accepting
150 applications. Upon the closing date for acceptance of
151 applications, the department shall forward the completed
152 applications to the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs at the
153 University of Mississippi Medical Center, who shall determine the
154 number of openings available for participation in the academy.

155 **SECTION 3.** Students selected to participate in the academy
156 must be provided, as an incentive to participate, a stipend in an



157 amount not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) for the
158 completion of the academy.

159 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is established in the State Treasury a
160 fund to be known as the "Health Careers Academy Trust Fund." The
161 purpose of the fund is to provide financial support to local
162 school districts and UMMC for start-up costs and costs associated
163 with implementing and operating the Health Careers Academy. The
164 fund may consist of monies obtained from grants from the federal
165 government, funds made available by the Legislature, and grants,
166 gifts, devises and donations from any public or private source.
167 The State Board of Education and the Board of Trustees of State
168 Institutions of Higher Learning shall administer the fund and may
169 apply for any grants from the federal government or private
170 sources.

171 (2) The State Board of Education and the Board of Trustees
172 of State Institutions of Higher Learning jointly shall adopt rules
173 and regulations necessary for the implementation of this section.
174 If sufficient funds are available for this purpose, monies from
175 the Health Careers Academy Trust Fund must be allocated to UMMC in
176 accordance with the procedures established by the State Board of
177 Education and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of
178 Higher Learning.

179 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
180 and after July 1, 2024.

