

By: Representatives Lamar, Steverson,
Aguirre, Anderson (122nd), Barnett, Bell
(21st), Boyd (19th), Calvert, Grady, Harris,
Hawkins, Hood, Lancaster, Massengill, Oliver,
Shanks, Smith, Felsher

To: Education;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 921

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE "MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS
2 SCHOOL SAFETY (MS ROSS) ACT" FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING THE
3 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO ASSIST LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
4 AGENCIES AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES WITH THE COST OF EMPLOYING A
5 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) AT EACH SCHOOL CAMPUS WITHIN THE
6 JURISDICTIONS OF THEIR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNING AUTHORITIES;
7 TO DEFINE TERMINOLOGY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE ASSISTANCE OF EMPLOYING
8 SROS SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ELEMENTARY AND
9 SECONDARY SCHOOLS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALLOCATE A
10 PERCENTAGE OF THE COST FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF ONE SRO FOR EACH
11 SCHOOL CAMPUS; TO REQUIRE THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY AND/OR
12 THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD TO PROVIDE THE REMAINING PERCENTAGE OF
13 THE COST FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF ONE SRO FOR EACH SCHOOL CAMPUS
14 WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION OF CONTROL; TO REQUIRE LOCAL LAW
15 ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES TO MAKE JOINT
16 APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE APPROVAL OF ALLOCATION OF
17 FUNDS; TO SPECIFY THE INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN THE
18 APPLICATION; TO PRESCRIBE THE DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM INCLUDING THE
19 REQUIREMENT OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING OR INTERLOCAL
20 AGREEMENT BETWEEN A LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY AND A SCHOOL
21 GOVERNING BODY; TO AMEND SECTION 37-7-321, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF
22 1972, IN CONFORMITY TO THE PRECEDING PROVISIONS; TO CREATE THE
23 MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS SCHOOL SAFETY (MS ROSS) FUND
24 AS A SPECIAL FUND IN THE STATE TREASURY; TO PROVIDE THAT MONIES IN
25 THE SPECIAL FUND SHALL BE USED TO PROVIDE FUNDS TO LOCAL LAW
26 ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES FOR THE PURPOSES
27 DESCRIBED IN THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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



29 **SECTION 1.** (1) This act shall be known and may be cited as
30 the "Mississippi School Resource Officers School Safety (MS ROSS)
31 Act."

32 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms shall
33 have the meanings ascribed herein unless context or use requires
34 otherwise:

35 (a) "Act" means the "Mississippi School Resource
36 Officers School Safety (MS ROSS) Act."

37 (b) "Applicable percentage" means:

38 (i) For the 2025 - 2026 scholastic year, thirty
39 percent (30%);

40 (ii) For the 2026 - 2027 scholastic year, forty
41 percent (40%);

42 (iii) For the 2027 - 2028 scholastic year, fifty
43 percent (50%);

44 (iv) For the 2028 - 2029 scholastic year, sixty
45 percent (60%); and

46 (v) For the 2029 - 2030 scholastic year and each
47 scholastic year thereafter, seventy percent (70%).

48 (c) "Department" means the Mississippi Department of
49 Public Safety.

50 (d) "Local law enforcement agency" means the local
51 police department or county sheriff's office that has primary law
52 enforcement authority over the schools within its jurisdiction.



53 (e) "Independent school" means a nonpublic school
54 operating within the State of Mississippi that:

55 (i) Is a member of the Midsouth Association of
56 Independent Schools (MAIS) and located in the State of
57 Mississippi;

58 (ii) Is accredited by a state, regional or
59 national accrediting organization, including the State Board of
60 Education; and

61 (iii) Is not subject to the purview of authority
62 of the State Board of Education, unless such school is accredited
63 by the board.

64 (f) "Program" means the Mississippi School Resource
65 Officers School Safety (MS ROSS) program, established in and
66 administered by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety.

67 (g) "School governing body" means:

68 (i) The local school board of a public school
69 district;

70 (ii) The charter school governing board of a
71 charter school; and

72 (iii) The board or other governing body of an
73 accredited independent school, as such governing body is
74 prescribed in the charter, bylaws or other governing documents of
75 the independent school.

76 (h) "School resource officer" or "SRO" means a sworn
77 law enforcement officer employed by a local law enforcement agency



78 and assigned to public or private elementary or secondary school
79 campuses to provide community policing efforts to combat school
80 violence and improve student and school safety in or on the
81 property of the school campus to which he or she is assigned.

82 **SECTION 3.** (1) There is hereby established the Mississippi
83 School Resource Officers School Safety (MS ROSS) program in the
84 Mississippi Department of Public Safety to provide funding to
85 assist local law enforcement agencies in providing school resource
86 officers (SROs) to all public and private elementary and secondary
87 school campuses within the jurisdictions over which such agencies
88 have primary law enforcement authority for the purpose of
89 providing enhanced security and community policing in and around
90 all elementary and secondary schools therein.

91 (2) The MS ROSS program shall meet the following
92 requirements and standards:

93 (a) The program shall provide an incentive for law
94 enforcement agencies to build collaborative partnerships with the
95 school community and to use community policing efforts to combat
96 school violence and implement educational programs to improve
97 student and school safety;

98 (b) (i) The department shall provide the funds under
99 the authority of this act for the administration of the program to
100 provide the applicable percentage of the cost associated with the
101 employment of one (1) school resource officer (SRO) by a local law
102 enforcement agency for each school campus within the jurisdiction



103 over which the agency has primary law enforcement authority, to be
104 applied towards the SRO's salary and benefits, training, equipment
105 and other costs deemed necessary by the local law enforcement
106 agency and school governing body to enable the SRO to perform his
107 or her duties in and around elementary and secondary schools up to
108 a total salary cost of Fifty-five Thousand Dollars (\$55,000.00).
109 However, if the total cost associated with the employment of a SRO
110 employed under the provisions of this act exceeds Fifty-five
111 Thousand Dollars (\$55,000.00) then the department shall only pay
112 the applicable percentage of the Fifty-five Thousand Dollars
113 (\$55,000.00), and any amount in excess of the applicable
114 percentage shall be borne by the local law enforcement agency or
115 school district, or combination of both; and

116 (ii) The department shall require the parties
117 making joint application for funds under paragraph (c) to commit
118 to paying the remaining percentage of the cost associated with the
119 employment of one (1) school resource officer (SRO) by a local law
120 enforcement agency for each school campus under the authority and
121 control of the school governing board that falls within the
122 jurisdiction of the local law enforcement agency, to be applied
123 towards the SRO's salary and benefits, training, equipment and
124 other costs deemed necessary by the local law enforcement agency
125 and school governing body to enable the SRO to perform his or her
126 duties in and around elementary and secondary schools;



127 (c) Local law enforcement agencies and school governing
128 bodies shall make joint application to the department for funds
129 under the authority of subsection (1) of this section for the
130 purpose of funding the employment of SROs in the amount prescribed
131 in paragraph (b) of this subsection. The joint application
132 submitted by the local law enforcement agency and school governing
133 body shall, at a minimum:

134 (i) Identify the local law enforcement agency to
135 provide the school resource officers, and the name of chief law
136 enforcement officer of the agency;

137 (ii) Identify the school governing body to be
138 served by the local law enforcement agency, and the names of the
139 president of such governing body and the superintendent or head of
140 schools under the governing body's authority and control;

141 (iii) The total number of schools, the total
142 number of school campuses and the names of all schools under the
143 schools governing body's authority and control;

144 (iv) The names of the principals of each school
145 under the schools governing body's authority and control;

146 (v) The name, address and phone number of each
147 school campus to be served a school resource officer (SRO)

148 (vi) The proposed salary of each school resource
149 officer (SRO), with the acknowledged understanding that the
150 department will only pay the applicable percentage under paragraph



151 (b) of this subsection of salaries that do not exceed Fifty-five
152 Thousand Dollars (\$55,000.00); and

153 (vii) The approximate number of school resource
154 officers (SROs) necessary for employment to accomplish the goal of
155 assigning one (1) SRO to each school campus as required by this
156 act;

157 (d) The local law enforcement agency and the
158 appropriate school governing body shall enter into a Memorandum of
159 Understanding (MOU) or an interlocal agreement, signed by the
160 chief law enforcement officer and the appropriate school
161 officials, which provides:

162 (i) Documentation of the roles and
163 responsibilities to be undertaken by the law enforcement agency
164 and the educational school partners through this collaborative
165 effort;

166 (ii) That school resource officers (SROs) will be
167 official employees of the local law enforcement agency that has
168 primary law enforcement authority over the schools within its
169 jurisdiction;

170 (iii) Which party to the MOU or interlocal
171 agreement, the local law enforcement agency or school governing
172 body, will be financially responsible for funding the match of the
173 cost associated with the employment of each school resource
174 officer (SRO) by a local law enforcement agency, if only one (1)
175 such party will bear the financial responsibility;



176 (iv) If both parties to the MOU or interlocal
177 agreement will share the financial responsibility of funding the
178 required match of the cost associated with the employment of each
179 school resource officer (SRO) by a local law enforcement agency,
180 then the MOU or interlocal agreement shall stipulate the portion
181 of the percentage of the matching funds each party shall be
182 obligated to commit for each SRO employed and assigned to school
183 campuses under the authority and control of the school governing
184 body; and

185 (v) A Narrative Addendum to document that school
186 resource officers (SROs) will be assigned to work in and around
187 public and private elementary or secondary school campuses and
188 provide supporting documentation in the following areas:

- 189 1. Problem identification and justification;
190 2. Community policing strategies to be used
191 by the SROs;
192 3. Quality and level of commitment to the
193 effort; and
194 4. The link to community policing; and

195 (e) Upon the employment of an individual to serve as a
196 school resource officer under the provisions of this act, the
197 employing school district, in conjunction with said school
198 resource officer, shall complete the development and/or
199 enhancement of a comprehensive school safety plan for each school
200 campus in the school district under the school resource officer's



201 enforcement authority within sixty (60) days of the approval of
202 the individual's employment by the local school governing
203 authority. Before the expiration of the sixty-day period, the
204 local school governing authority shall provide copies of the
205 comprehensive school safety plan to the local law enforcement
206 agency having primary law enforcement authority over each school
207 impacted by the school safety plan(s) within their jurisdiction,
208 and to the Department of Public Safety.

209 (3) School resource officers (SROs) may serve in a variety
210 of roles, including, but not limited to, that of a law enforcement
211 officer, safety specialist, law-related educator, problem-solver
212 and community liaison. These officers may teach programs such as
213 crime prevention, substance abuse prevention and gang resistance,
214 as well as monitor and assist troubled students through mentoring
215 programs. The SROs may also identify physical changes in the
216 environment that may reduce crime in and around school campuses,
217 as well as assist in developing school policies which address
218 criminal activity and school safety.

219 (4) All agencies receiving funds through the Mississippi
220 School Resource Officers School Safety (MS ROSS) program are
221 required to send the individuals employed as school resource
222 officers (SROs) to the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers'
223 Training Academy or a law enforcement training academy approved by
224 the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, where they shall be



225 required to participate in training through the Advanced Law
226 Enforcement Rapid Response Training Program at such academy.

227 (5) The Mississippi Department of Public Safety shall
228 promulgate rules and regulations prescribing procedures for the
229 application, expenditure requirements and the administration of
230 the Mississippi Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools
231 (MS ROSS) program established in this section, and shall make a
232 report on the implementation of the MS ROSS program with any
233 recommendations to the 2026 Regular Session of the Legislature.

234 **SECTION 4.** There is created in the State Treasury a special
235 fund, to be designated as the "Mississippi School Resource
236 Officers School Safety (MS ROSS) Fund", which shall consist of
237 funds made available by the Legislature in any manner. The fund
238 shall be maintained by the State Treasurer as a separate and
239 special fund, separate and apart from the General Fund of the
240 state. Unexpended amounts remaining in the fund at the end of a
241 fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund, and any
242 interest earned or investment earnings on amounts in the fund
243 shall be deposited into such fund. Monies in the fund shall be
244 disbursed, in the discretion of the Department of Public Safety,
245 to provide funds to local law enforcement agencies and school
246 governing bodies for the purposes described in this section.
247 The department may use an amount equal to one percent (1%) of the
248 monies in the fund, not to exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand



249 Dollars, for the purpose of defraying the costs of the department
250 in administering the program.

251 **SECTION 5.** Section 37-7-321, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
252 amended as follows:

253 37-7-321. (1) (a) The school board of any school district
254 within the State of Mississippi, in its discretion, may employ one
255 or more persons as security personnel and may designate such
256 persons as peace officers in or on any property operated for
257 school purposes by such board upon their taking such oath and
258 making such bond as required of a constable of the county in which
259 the school district is situated.

260 (b) Local law enforcement agencies having primary law
261 enforcement authority over schools within their jurisdiction, in
262 conjunction with the school boards of every school district within
263 the State of Mississippi, through a Memorandum of Understanding
264 (MOU) or interlocal agreement, signed by the law enforcement
265 executive and the appropriate school official(s), shall employ
266 individuals to serve as school resource officers (SROs), provided
267 that the MOU or interlocal agreement shall require a minimum of
268 one (1) school resource officer to be assigned each school campus
269 operating under the authority and control of the local school
270 board.

271 (2) Any person employed by a school board as a security
272 guard or school resource officer (SRO) or in any other position
273 that has the powers of a peace officer, who is not a sworn law



274 enforcement officer, must receive a minimum level of basic law
275 enforcement training, as jointly determined and prescribed by the
276 Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Training and the
277 State Board of Education, within two (2) years of the person's
278 initial employment in such position. * * * The failure of any
279 person employed in such position to receive the required training
280 within the designated time * * * will result in the withdrawal of
281 that person's * * * authority to exercise the powers of a peace
282 officer in or on the property of the school district.

283 (3) The school board is authorized and empowered, in its
284 discretion, and subject to the approval of the Federal
285 Communications Commission, to install and operate a noncommercial
286 radio broadcasting and transmission station for educational and
287 vocational educational purposes.

288 (4) If a law enforcement officer is duly appointed to be a
289 peace officer by a school district under this section, the local
290 school board may enter into an interlocal agreement with other law
291 enforcement entities for the provision of equipment or traffic
292 control duties, however, the duty to enforce traffic regulations
293 and to enforce the laws of the state or municipality off of school
294 property lies with the local police or sheriff's department which
295 cannot withhold its services solely because of the lack of such an
296 agreement.

297 (5) (a) During any period of the regular scholastic year or
298 extended school year programs in which academic instruction is



299 being provided to students upon the campuses of a public and
300 private elementary or secondary schools, school resource officers,
301 employed by a local law enforcement agency to provide community
302 policing efforts to combat school violence and improve student and
303 school safety, shall maintain an active and visible presence upon
304 the school campus to which he or she is assigned under the program
305 defined in Section 1 of this act. For purposes of this section,
306 "regular scholastic year" means the minimum one hundred eighty
307 (180) days which public schools are required to be kept in session
308 under Section 37-13-63 to constitute a scholastic year. "Extended
309 school year programs" means those programs authorized by law,
310 which extend beyond the one hundred eighty-day term of a regular
311 scholastic year, including summer school instruction. In the
312 performance of his or her duties, a school resource officer shall
313 report for duty on the campus of the school of assignment not
314 later than one (1) hour before the start of each school day on
315 Monday through Friday, and remain thereon for one (1) hour after
316 the conclusion of normal daily instruction. No school resource
317 officer shall be required to work on Saturday or Sunday, unless a
318 school sponsored event is hosted upon the school campus which the
319 school resource officer has been assigned, which such events shall
320 include extracurricular and cocurricular activities.

321 (b) When school is not in session (i.e. holidays,
322 summer vacation, fall breaks, declarations of emergency which
323 suspend the requirements for school attendance, etc.), the school



324 resource officer shall report to his or her immediate supervisor
325 within the local law enforcement agency of employment for further
326 assignment of duties that are directly related to activities and
327 functions of the local law enforcement agency.

328 (c) Notwithstanding a school resource officer's
329 permanent employment with the local law enforcement agency with
330 whom a local school governing authority has entered into a
331 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or an interlocal agreement for
332 the assignment of a school resource officer, the employing local
333 law enforcement agency shall not require a school resource officer
334 to leave his or her assigned post at a school during the time
335 specified for the performance of his or her duties as prescribed
336 in paragraph (a) of this subsection to perform work duties
337 directly related to activities and functions of the local law
338 enforcement agency, unless it has been determined by the chief law
339 enforcement officer of the employing agency that exigent
340 circumstances exist, which have created an emergency situation of
341 an impending catastrophic nature that requires swift action to
342 prevent imminent danger to life, substantial harm to the public
343 welfare or serious damage to property.

344 **SECTION 6.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
345 and after July 1, 2025.

