

By: Representative Byrd

To: Corrections

HOUSE BILL NO. 1735

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF
2 CORRECTIONS TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF INMATES UNDER ITS
3 JURISDICTION TO DETERMINE THE PREVALENCE OF INDIVIDUALS WITH
4 DYSLEXIA AND MAKE A REPORT THEREON TO THE LEGISLATURE; AND FOR
5 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1. Study on Dyslexia among inmates.** (1) The
8 Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) shall conduct a
9 comprehensive study of inmates under its jurisdiction to determine
10 the prevalence of individuals with dyslexia.

11 (2) The study shall include, but not be limited to:

12 (a) Screening for dyslexia using evidence-based tools
13 and methods approved by qualified experts in the field of dyslexia
14 diagnosis and education.

15 (b) Collection of demographic and educational
16 background data, including the inmate's age, gender, race and
17 prior access to educational resources, provided that such data is
18 collected in a manner that protects individual privacy.



(c) An analysis of how dyslexia correlates with educational attainment, disciplinary history and recidivism rates.

SECTION 2. **Protection of confidential information.** (1) All data collected pursuant to this study shall comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and any other applicable federal or state laws regarding the privacy and confidentiality of health and educational records.

(2) Inmates shall be informed of their rights and shall have the opportunity to opt out of participation in the study without fear of reprisal or negative consequences.

SECTION 3. **Report to the Legislature.** (1) The Mississippi Department of Corrections shall compile the findings of the study and submit a report to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2026.

(2) The report shall include:

(a) The prevalence of dyslexia among inmates under the jurisdiction of the MDOC.

(b) Demographic data and trends associated with the findings, presented in aggregate form.

(c) Recommendations for programs, policies or legislation to address the needs of inmates with dyslexia and improve educational and rehabilitation outcomes.



43 **SECTION 4. Implementation and funding.** (1) The Mississippi

44 Department of Corrections may seek grants or other funding sources
45 to assist with the costs of conducting the study.

46 (2) The MDOC is authorized to partner with educational
47 institutions, nonprofit organizations or other qualified entities
48 with expertise in dyslexia to conduct the study.

49 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
50 and after July 1, 2026.

