

NAACP NEWS

www.naacps.org

Derrick Johnson
State President



Mississippi State Conference

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

MS NAACP Media • media@naacps.org - 601-353-8452

GOVERNOR BRYANT RECKLESSLY VETOES HB 1033

The Mississippi State Conference NAACP is deeply disappointed with Governor Bryant's recent veto of the Reentry Council Reforms Bill or House Bill Number 1033. "This bill was passed through a bi-partisan effort to adopt the recommendations of the Mississippi Reentry Council to help the formerly incarcerated reintegrate into their communities and increase public safety while reducing budgetary pressures caused by the high cost of incarceration," said Derrick Johnson, MS State Conference President.

In vetoing the bill, Bryant stated that, "while House Bill 1033 was introduced with good intentions, these good intentions were ultimately spoiled." In fact, the bill's good intentions were spoiled by Governor Bryant himself.

Bryant says he vetoed the bill because it "would allow certain inmates convicted as habitual offenders... to be eligible for parole after serving 25% of the sentence."

This is patently untrue.

What the bill would have done was allow some inmates who had previously been ineligible for parole be eligible after serving at least 25% of his or her sentence if he or she was **NOT** convicted of a violent crime, drug trafficking, or as a habitual offender.

"The language of the bill, in fact, states precisely the opposite of what Bryant says it does," said Johnson.

The only change the bill gave to habitual offenders under Mississippi law was that if a judge chose not to impose the current standard of a maximum sentence to three time offenders, then the reasons for not doing so must be put in writing. The habitual offender, however, would still **NOT** be eligible for parole.

"As the Governor of Mississippi, I must assume that Bryant is not incompetent," Johnson continues. "However, his reasons don't make any sense and contradict the very language of the bill. So, it makes me wonder what his real reasons are for vetoing a bill that the house, the senate, Democrats, and Republicans unanimously passed to give deserving Mississippians a second chance at life."

For more information, call 601-353-8452 or visit www.naacps.org.

###

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. For more information about the Mississippi NAACP or news stories, call 601-353- 8452 or log on to www.naacps.org. Like us on Facebook by searching Mississippi NAACP and follow us on Twitter @MSNAACP.