

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

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February 23, 2010

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached documents are a comparison and analysis of the per pupil costs of the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) and the per inmate costs of the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

For the fifteen fiscal years from 1995 through 2009, the annual cost per inmate has increased from \$8,774.60 to \$13,828.25. During the same time, the annual cost per pupil has increased from \$2,516 to \$5,066. State funding of Corrections has nearly tripled during this period while state funding for MAEP has not quite doubled.

In Senate Bill 2688, the Legislature restored \$33.9 million (or 19%) of the \$179M budget reduction made by the Governor to the FY 2010 funding of MAEP. Also in this bill, the Legislature restored \$1 million (or 3%) of the \$29 million reduction made to the Department of Corrections.

The Governor would like for the Legislature to restore \$16 million to the Department of Corrections. If the additional \$15 million allocation for Corrections was to be achieved by reducing MAEP, MAEP would lose funding equivalent to the support of 2,962 students. Of course, it is difficult to determine how each of the 152 school districts would address this shortfall in state support.

The cost per inmate is already \$8,762 more than the \$5,065 cost per pupil. It is my opinion that the State of Mississippi should reflect its priority of funding education of our most precious resource, our children, by restoring FY 2010 at the maximum possible rather than diverting state funds to the Department of Corrections.

Sincerely,


George Flaggs, Jr.

GF/fb

Enclosures (3)

cc: Haley Barbour, Governor
Phil Bryant, Lieutenant Governor
William J. McCoy, Speaker of the House
J. P. Compretta, Speaker Pro Tempore
Johnny Stringer, House Appropriations Chairman
Alan Nunnelee, Senate Appropriations Chairman