
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: **HB 238**
DATE: 3/8/01
CC: FILE

HB 238

HB 238 amends Section 57-43-13 to abolish the Mississippi Grade Crossing Closure Account and transfer the money in the account to a new account entitled the Mississippi Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Account. HB 238 creates a new section codified as Section 57-43-15 which creates this Mississippi Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Account and provides that this account be administered by MDOT and consist of the above-mentioned transferred funds and 35% of collections from the locomotive fuel tax for the previous year. HB 238 provides for MDOT, in cooperation with the railroads operating in Mississippi, promulgate rules to ensure the equitable allocation of funds for highway-railroad grade crossing closures and installation or upgrade of highway-railroad grade crossing signals. MDOT is to establish uniform criteria and guidelines relating to such crossings and the expenditure of funds.

Both the Supervisors Association and the Railroad Association support this bill. The Railroad Association requested the bill and Francis Lundy said that HB 238 will enable counties to upgrade railroad crossings and hopefully save lives. Lundy told the Senate Transportation Committee that there is currently about \$700,000 in the Mississippi Grade Crossing Closure Account that will be transferred to Mississippi Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Account. Senator Billy Hewes questioned Lundy as to if counties currently subsidize railroad crossing upgrades. Lundy said that counties are currently subsidizing upgrades and that the bulk of expenses do fall on the county or the city. HB 238 will provide more funds for counties for these upgrades.

HB 238 is effective July 1, 2001.