

Mississippi State Senate

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SENATOR SOLLIE B. NORWOOD

District 28
Hinds County

Tom Hood, Executive Director, Mississippi Ethics Commission
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Director Hood:

I am writing to request an advisory opinion pertaining to standards of conduct for members of the legislature. Please issue guidance regarding the following items.

Do legislators violate the Mississippi Open Meetings Act (Miss. Code. Ann. §§ 25-41-1 through 24-41-17) when a majority of members of either the House or Senate assemble in a closed meeting without providing public notice to: (a) discuss the business of the body including legislation that will appear before the full chamber or (b) to take "straw polls" to determine whether to bring certain matters before the full body?

Is it lawful for a political caucus that represents a majority in a legislative chamber to exclude from its meetings any member of that chamber when business of the full body is discussed or decided during that caucus meeting?

Thank you for your prompt consideration of these matters.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sollie B. Norwood".

Senator Sollie B. Norwood
District 28