

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact information:

Rep. Chuck Espy

P.O. Box 1508

Clarksdale, MS 38614

(662) 902-6884

ESPY TO PROPOSE BODY CAMERAS FOR UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICERS
Officer/Community Relationship Tantamount to Trust

During the 2015 legislative session, Representative Chuck Espy will introduce critical legislation on equipping police officers with body cameras while on patrol. "Given recent national events over the past year, including Ferguson, MO and New York, the public has increasingly lost confidence in our policing and judicial systems," stated Espy. "The level of trust between local police and the communities they protect will determine the strength of that relationship," Espy continued.

Digital video devices have been used as an effective way to provide proof of events. It also creates a record with time and dates stamps, audio, and GPS location, which helps authenticate incidents and log an automatic evidence file. While dash cameras are used by the Mississippi Highway Patrol, body cameras would give state and local law enforcement another tool to not only protect themselves, but the public as well. Espy suggested that jurisdictions "develop protocol, training and guidelines for the use of body cameras, but see the use of the devices as an extra layer of security."

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) notes that body cameras are an effective way of policing, which increases accountability and transparency in their interactions with the community. A New York Times (8/2013) article, *In California, a Champion for Police Cameras*, cited the Rialto, California, Police Department's use of officer-mounted cameras resulted in an 88% decrease in complaints filed against officers and a 60% decrease in incidents where officers used force, with those officers not wearing cameras being twice as likely to use force.

Espy is confident he can secure bipartisan support for the initiative "since we all have the same interest in building public trust and protecting our communities."

To reach Representative Espy directly, send correspondence to cespy3@gmail.com.

###