

Economic Development Plan

Q and A

Q: What is “the New Economy”?

A: It is a marketplace that is driven by technology-one that changes at a fast pace. It is borderless and has the potential to be global.

Q: What type of companies is Mississippi trying to attract?

A: We are positioning ourselves to attract high-tech companies. We also focus on existing business and industry to ensure that their products or services can compete.

Q: Some legislators have voiced their concern about not having time to review the plan. What is your response?

A: That is why we are introducing the economic development plan today so that legislators will have 3 full weeks to review it before the special session.

Q: Will you include transportation in the special session?

A: Transportation is a piece of the overall economic development picture, which we will resolve, but we will not lose sight of the big picture.

Q: Why is a new economic development plan important?

A: The current plan was drafted in 1989. It is eleven years old. In order to expand prosperity for the people who live in all 82 counties of our state, we must redefine our approach to economic growth.

Q: Who is on the Mississippi Partnership for Economic Development?

A: The Mississippi Partnership for Economic Development is the first ever public/private partnership, consisting of a diverse selection of Mississippians, which was formed to create a new economic development plan that will dramatically affect economic growth and prosperity for our people.

Q: Who was involved with developing this plan?

A: Members of the Partnership along with several thousand people from across the state of Mississippi who participated in the statewide meetings held by MDA.

Q: Have you spoken with the Lt. Governor and the Speaker to review the plan?

A: Yes, I have spoken with both.

Q: What do they think about the plan?

A: I along with the Lt. Governor and the Speaker know how important economic development is to the people of the State of Mississippi, and we will work together in an effort to improve the quality of life for each of them.

Q: Are you criticizing the former administration's economic development plan?

A: The current plan is eleven years old. As the world changes, and technology becomes more prevalent, we must change with it. This new plan gives us the tools we need to respond to the opportunities that present themselves. The blueprint that has been created will maximize our comparative advantages and develop our competitive advantages, which in turn creates more, higher-paying jobs for our people.

Q: How does education fit into the plan?

A: Education is a key component to economic development. Through initiatives like placing an Internet-accessible computer in every classroom statewide we are helping to prepare our students for today and tomorrow's marketplace. We must create additional quality educational, training and retraining opportunities that meet the needs of businesses.

Q: What is going to be the cost?

A: This is an investment in the people of Mississippi, and an investment that we must make. What is important is not what it costs but what it will do for our people.

Q: What do you think about Gore's selection of Joseph Lieberman as his VP running mate?

A: I do not believe any formal announcement has been made by Vice President Gore regarding his selection of a running mate.