

Q and A
Radio Interviews

What is your position on the Raynard Johnson case?

The case is under investigation and has been under investigation since the night of the incident. The Marion County Sherrif's Department, the Department of Public Safety and the FBI have been working together on collecting and investigating all evidence related to the case. We are waiting until the investigation is completed to make a comment. To make a statement prior to the completion of the investigation would be irresponsible.

Have you talked with Rev. Jackson?

We have talked on several occasions.

What have you discussed?

I explained that the investigation was ongoing and being thoroughly reviewed by all of the agencies involved, and we would make an assessment at the completion of the investigation.

Why did you not meet with Reverend Jackson?

Reverend Jackson and I were scheduled to meet on a Friday at 1:30 p.m. I was scheduled as the keynote speaker for the American Legion at 2:00 p.m. and then left immediately to travel to the Coast for a speaking engagement on Keesler Air Force Base. Unfortunately Rev. Jackson arrived at our offices after 2:00 p.m. and we were unable to meet.

Are you going to confront Reverend Jackson regarding his accusations/allegations against the people of Kokomo and the State of Mississippi?

We will wait until the investigation is completed to make a statement.

Have you spoken with the family?

Al Gore

Why have you endorsed Al Gore?

While I do not agree with Vice President Gore's position on all issues, I do support his vision for improving education, economic development and healthcare for our country. He is also our neighbor from Tennessee and I believe he will remember his neighbors in Washington.

What is your position on abortion?

I am pro-life. Mississippi Right to Life endorsed me last year.

Was it premature to endorse him so early?

I believe the Vice President has a vision for the future of our country and agree with his plan for the issues that are important to Americans including education, healthcare, jobs and others. We support his campaign for President.

Democratic Party in Mississippi

Are you a member of the Mississippi Democratic Party?

Yes I am.

What is your role in the party?

I am glad to work with the leadership of the party that is focused on finding solutions to difficult issues.

Are you going to the National Convention?

Yes, we will be participating.

Trent Lott

How do you work with Trent Lott and others in Washington?

Real well.

We have met several times with the leadership in Washington. We are all interested in creating opportunities for the people of Mississippi.

Flag

Why did you appoint more white people than black to the commission?

I appointed 11 of the 17 commission members. 3 were appointed by the Lt. Governor and 3 were appointed by the Speaker of the House. I appointed people to serve who will be fair, impartial and make decisions that best benefit the people of Mississippi. Of the 11 appointments, 5 are white males, 2 are white females, 2 black males and 2 black females.

The commission will report their suggestions to the Legislature on, or before May 4th of next year. It will then be the responsibility of the Legislature to take action.

Do you support changing the flag?

I do not want to influence the commission in any way, and I am fully supportive of the Commission and their efforts to represent the people of Mississippi.

Appointments

We have made a point to select our appointments very carefully. The statutes for each appointment are extremely tedious and specific according to congressional districts, supreme court districts and other requirements.

We have selected people from all across the state who are representative of the people who live, work and raise their families in Mississippi.

IHL

Of the 12 member positions on the board, positions needed to be filled in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Congressional Districts of 1944 along with one from the current 3rd Supreme Court District.

According to the statute, the appointments had to come from Congressional and Supreme Court Districts in the northern half of the state.

Transportation

What are you going to do about the problems at the Department of Transportation?

We are concerned about the budget problems at MDOT. Unfortunately, MDOT is one of those departments that is not under the control of the Governor's office. The operations and decisions of MDOT are made by 3 elected commissioners.

What is being done to relieve congestion problems on the Coast?

When I was Lt. Governor, \$325 Million in bonding authority for the MDOT to from gaming counties to be used by MDOT for transportation improvements. To date MDOT has used only \$125 Million of that money.

Ayers Case

We have taken a leadership role in the resolution of the Ayers Case by bringing representatives of the involved parties together to determine the best form of action to take to resolve the case.

We have had several meetings and are pleased with the interest that all involved parties have to see the Ayers Case resolved in a timely manner.

We are all committed to working together to reach a resolution.

Potential Vice Presidential Candidate

Have you been contacted by Gore?

I have not been contacted by anyone from the Gore camp.

Congressional Races

Who do you support for the various congressional races?

I have not endorsed any candidate at this time. I am supportive of the best person for the job who will do the most good for the people of our state.

USM Gulf Park

Do you support a 4-year university on the Gulf Coast?

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is large enough to sustain a four-year university.

Providing the people of the Gulf Coast with the option of attaining their four-year degree at home rather than going out-of-state is a smart choice.

Having a four-year university on the coast would produce a better workforce pool for Coast industries and businesses to have the option to hire. It is a win-win situation both for the students and for the businesses in the southern portion of the state.

Do you support college courses on gaming?

I am not in favor of having state institutions or community/junior colleges teach courses to train or teach gaming employees. The courses I would rather see our universities focus on in the area of tourism are management and Hotel, Restaurant Tourism.

The workforce that is needed to fill vacancies in gaming is being addressed by private schools that provide specialized instruction for that one particular field.