

**Stennis Capitol Press Lunch**  
**Possible**  
**Q and A**

**Appointment of Ben Barrett Smith as Chairman of the Workers Compensation**

Commission: (they are more than likely going to drag up everything that happened with Gov. Fordice's appointment. See attached articles)

- I appointed Ben Barrett because I have worked with him and I know his abilities as a lawyer.
- I appointed Mr. Smith because he is the best person for the position of Chairman.
- My appointment has nothing to do with anything other than choosing the person who has the best qualifications for the position, and that person is Ben Barrett Smith.
- As Lieutenant Governor I urged Governor Fordice to nominate someone besides Mike Marsh, which he did not do.
- Ben Barrett Smith's legal background will assist him in carrying out the duties of this job.

**Teacher Pay** (you will probably get some pointed questions about who is opposing the teacher pay raise)

- The plan works. We have shown time and time again that the plan works. We have used the legislature's budget figures to develop our plan, and we have demonstrated across the state, and to anyone who would listen how the plan can become a reality.
- If the legislature does not commit to funding teacher pay, we will see the gap between Mississippi and the contiguous and Southeastern states widen
- If you look at the top ranked states in education, you find they make traditional investments in education. They pay their teachers competitive salaries so that top students are encouraged to go into teaching and they don't lose experienced educators to neighboring states.

**Census**

Why are Mississippians not responding to the Census?

- We are doubling our efforts to reach all Mississippians with the message of the importance of sending in their Census forms or talking with Census enumerators. I believe that people will respond as they continue to hear us talk about it's importance.

What is your reaction to Senator Lott's comment to people that they don't have to complete the entire form?

- Some people may find the longer Census form to take too long to complete, I believe that Senator Lott was simply trying to persuade people to send in their forms even if they did not complete all of the questions.

### **State Flag**

Do you believe that the State flag should be removed from flying at the Capitol?

- The state flag was adopted in 1894.
- I think the State of Mississippi has more important issues, like raising teacher pay, to be concerned with right now.

### **Chicken Bill**

What would you have done if you were Lt. Governor and a fight broke out on the Senate floor?

- I can't say what I would have done, because no fights occurred on the floor when I was Lt. Governor. It is important for all legislators to work together for the benefit of all of our people.

What do you think will happen with the chicken bill?

- I understand that the bill has been committed to the appropriations committee.

Do you believe that because the bill has been committed to the appropriations committee that means the bill is basically dead?

- No, I do not believe that at all.