

Friday, April 14, 2000

Dear Mississippi State Employee:

I am aware of many Mississippi state employees' concern regarding the status of receiving pay raises, and I would like to share with you my thoughts about that matter.

You have heard me say time and time again that I believe the most critical issue facing the State of Mississippi is raising teacher pay to the Southeastern Average. We have been working diligently to ensure that a commitment is made to our children and to our teachers to put a pay raise plan into statute during this legislative session. Putting the plan into statute this year will mean that teachers will begin to receive raises on July 1, 2001.

I know how important our State employees are, and I know the positive contributions you make to our State. We know that in order for the public service arena to be able to recruit and retain a top quality workforce, we must be competitive with the private sector in both salary ranges and benefits for our employees.

We must invest in our people. We must be concerned about how our people live, that you are able to adequately provide for your families and that you are afforded the opportunity for an excellent quality of life. By working diligently and efficiently, we can, and will, invest in our people.

We believe that we can provide pay raises for both Mississippi's teachers and Mississippi state employees beginning July 1, 2001. It is important for you to know I will take a leadership role by working together with the legislature and you to provide much needed pay raises along with affordable health coverage for Mississippi's state employees.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

