

MEMORANDUM

October 4, 2001

TO: Governor

FROM: John

RE: Media inquiries

I spoke with Jim Bevers again this morning regarding his question about an employee bailout plan – as he put it, “an arrangement for early retirement to ease pressure on the payment system.” Jim said Rob Smith has asked the Retirement Board for some information on this, and he also said there are rumors that Capps is considering this and you are pushing it.

Suggested statement: “As I said in the spring, if we spent dollars based on inflated projections, we would be in a serious budget situation. We’re there. I appreciate the suggestions and ideas of legislators and encourage them to find avenues for us to explore in dealing with our fiscal issues.”

Brad Kessey with WLOX called this morning. He has a copy of the analysis done regarding the possibility of attracting the New Orleans Saints to the Gulf Coast, and is doing a story on some of the findings in the analysis. He recognizes that the Saints are a moot point, but he mentioned the statement always given in response to questions about the Saints (“it’s our policy not to comment on economic development efforts”) and wants to know, now that the Saints aren’t coming, what you thought of the report when you read it. He’s working a story for 6pm. Do you want a statement prepared?

I have spoken with John Peretta at AP and had a voicemail from Arnold Lindsay at the Clarion-Ledger. They are working on stories about J.C.’s replacement and want to know what the timeline is for replacing him, and whether or not we have had contact with possible replacements. John mentioned he had heard Ken Oelschlager (sp?) of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce was a candidate, and has spoken with him; Oelschlager said he had not been contacted. John has also heard the name of Wayne Sterling, most recently chief of staff of the Department of Commerce in South Carolina, mentioned as a candidate.

Suggested statement: “We are in the process of looking for a new executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority, and will look closely at all candidates. Out of respect for those candidates, their names will be kept confidential. An announcement will be made once that decision has been finalized.”

Patrice Sawyer at the Clarion-Ledger and Nikki Maute at the Hattiesburg-American are working on stories regarding potential budget cuts. Patrice wanted to know if you are looking at any budget cuts in the next few days based on first quarter revenue figures.

Suggested statement: “We directed agencies to budget 45 percent of their appropriations in anticipation of revenue shortfalls, so we’ve already reduced the appropriated amount of funds by 5 percent. I felt it was the prudent thing to do. That’s why I vetoed the budget, because it was based on inflated figures of nearly 4 percent.”

Mike Truett, a reporter with WMC in Memphis, is working on a story about a “homeland defense plan” for Mississippi – whether we have one, and if not, are we working on one.

Suggested statement: “My office has been meeting with the National Guard and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency on a regular basis since September 11. We want to take every precaution to protect the safety and security of the people of Mississippi.”

Tommy Shepard, an attorney at Watkins Ludlam, called and asked for some biographical information on A. J. Pitts. He said he has clients with matters before the Gaming Commission, and would like to know more about Mr. Pitts. Is this something you want released?

Both Sherry Vance and I have been receiving some calls for interviews with Steve Hale. At this time, Sherry and I both feel it would be best not to have Steve interviewed, but to issue general statements as necessary.