

*Remarks for the
Mississippi Chronic Illness Coalition Press Conference
January 14, 2003*

Good morning. I believe our health as a state reflects our future as a state. Healthy children go to school ready to learn. Healthy adults go to work ready to produce. When we're healthy, we're in a better position to build good schools, good jobs and good communities.

Too many of Mississippi's people suffer from chronic illnesses. Heart disease, cancer, diabetes – these are just a few of the illnesses holding us back from our true promise and potential.

It is important for every Mississippian to be aware of his or her health, and to know their cholesterol, blood pressure and other critical health information. Too many of our citizens are at risk and just don't know it.

I want to encourage every Mississippian to have a check-up, but this is just one aspect of a healthy lifestyle. Physical activity is important. Avoiding tobacco is important. Proper diet is important.

Our people are the most valuable asset this state has to offer. Let's stay healthy today – and prepare for a healthy future together.

Thank you.