

*Remarks for the
Delta Regional Medical Center Press Conference
October 29, 2003*

- Recognize elected officials in attendance
 - Ray Humphreys, CEO of Delta
Regional Medical Center and
 - Carl McGee, Chairman, Board of
Trustees

- I'm happy to join you today

- I am honored and it is indeed a pleasure to
be surrounded by so many people who care
deeply about the health and well being of
Mississippians

- Healthcare is not a privilege to be enjoyed by just a few
 - Nor is it a partisan issue over which we should become divisive
 - Instead, to ensure quality health care for our people
 - We must work together
 - To find affordable, accessible solutions

- We know that
 - Healthy citizens make a better workforce for today and tomorrow
 - Healthy adults wake up ready to go to work
 - Healthy children go to school ready to learn the skills necessary to be

productive members of tomorrow's
workforce

- continuing focus on primary care and preventative care will benefit Mississippi for years to come
 - our best interest to treat health concerns before they become problems
 - far less painful and expensive to immunize a child today than it is to treat an illness tomorrow

- I want to commend you for your leadership with the new facility vision and site announcement.

- Today's announcement not only reflects a state of the art future in health care,
 - but also demonstrates a major economic development statement for the entire region.

- This is the kind of partnership that is moving Mississippi forward.

- As you know, we have made a commitment to providing access to affordable health care in Mississippi.

- As a state senator and Lt. Governor, health care for our people was one of my top priorities.

- When I ran for Governor in 1999, I remember being right here in Greenville talking about our health care vision.

- As Governor, I am proud that we have one of the best Medicaid programs in the nation with one of the best Director's – Rica Lewis Payton.

- We have provided health care to over 58,000 children. Many, who come to you right here in Greenville.

- expanded access to health care in rural MS
 - Created the MS Access to Care plan
 - 2000, signed bill providing full scholarships for University of

Mississippi medical students who
agreed to practice for at least ten years
in rural parts of the state

- created the Healthcare Commission to
help leaders make informed decisions
about health care

- We plan to work with you on this project.
- Steve Hale and our entire economic
development team will work with you to
make your dream a reality.
- I look forward to the day when we can have
the groundbreaking for this new facility.

- By working **together** to address health care
 - we can make **tomorrow**,
 - the coming **months**
 - and the coming **years**
 - **brighter** for all of our **children.**