

April 8, 2002

Honorable Bubba Smith  
House of Representatives  
P.O. Box \_\_\_\_  
Smallville, MS \_\_\_\_

Dear Bubba:

It has been a pleasure to work with you and other members of the Legislature during the 2002 Regular Session for the betterment of the 2.8 million citizens of our state. Working together, we have reached common ground on several issues. We focused on priorities that are important to the citizens of Mississippi, including creating jobs, educating our children and protecting our communities.

We were close to reaching common ground on one of the most important issues facing our state, the health care of our citizens. However, we fell short. I know that you are as concerned about this issue as I am.

I vetoed HB 1794 today because it fails to adequately fund the Division of Medicaid for FY 2003 by \$120 million in state general funds. Because of our federal match, this will result in the loss of \$480 million worth of health care. I also vetoed SB 2189, the Medicaid Technical Amendment Bill.

Under the law, we will have no other alternative than to cut "optional" services, including nursing home beds, prescription drugs and home health services. This will have devastating impacts on our local communities and citizens. The Division of Medicaid provides assistance to 16,858 nursing home recipients, and we will have to eliminate 13,771 of these beds effective July 1, 2002.

We will have the opportunity to reach common ground this Friday, April 12. I am asking for your vote to sustain my vetoes of HB 1794 and SB 2189. I believe that by working together, we can once again reach common ground for the good of Mississippi.

Very truly yours,



RONNIE MUSGROVE