

March 23, 2002

To the citizens of Mississippi;

In the coming weeks, Mississippi law enforcement officers will send a very simple message to motorists – **“Click It or Ticket”**. Together, state and local law enforcement will conduct more than 3,000 public safety checkpoints in counties around the state during the two-week period of May 20, 2002 – June 2, 2002.

The goal of the **“Click It or Ticket”** campaign is to send the clear message that seat belts save lives. If you are not following the law, you’ll be ticketed. This crackdown on seatbelt and child restraint system infractions may sound like a tough approach, but consider the facts. Our state’s traffic fatality rate is one of the highest in the nation. Failure to buckle up contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety behavior. Of the 784 vehicle occupants killed on Mississippi highways last year, approximately 70% of those were unrestrained. In addition to the human tragedy of lost lives, the economic losses associated with traffic crashes are staggering. Traffic collisions cost all Mississippians in the form of higher insurance premiums, medical costs and taxes.

Last years **“Click It or Ticket”** campaign was very successful. Mississippi’s safety belt usage increased from 49% to 62% largely due to the public informational and education campaign and increased law enforcement efforts. This years ‘ goal is even higher. Each percentage point that safety belt usage increases results in approximately 10 lives saved; 120 injuries prevented and an estimated economic savings of over \$1.2 Million.

This office commends our law enforcement agencies across the state for the preparation and effort that they are putting into this campaign. Law enforcement cannot do it alone. We need the citizens of Mississippi to make buckling themselves and their children their number one priority. So please do your part.

Sincerely,

Governor Ronnie Musgrove