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OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** GOVERNOR  
**FROM:** RILEY  
**SUBJECT:** AFT REQUESTS  
**DATE:** 7/13/01  
**CC:** RENICK

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Maryann Graczyk and other members of AFT met with me to share the organization's 3 political action items and requested your support of each:

1. **Secure a true commitment for the salary plan by removal of the 5% contingency.** AFT is prepared to identify those legislators not in support of the 5% removal and to campaign against them in the next election.

*Your calling of the Special Session addresses this.*

2. **Secure more funding for public education and agencies.** AFT does not feel that it has seen efforts to increase revenues from current sources or to find new sources of funding. AFT offered the following suggestions for consideration:
  - A. **Full, public disclosure on the Nissan project.** AFT requested a report of all monies expended or expected to be expended on the project, concessions made to assure success of the project, and a summary of all agreements made.
  - B. **Full, public disclosure on private prisons.** AFT requested a report of all allocations and expenses related to the establishment of private prisons.
  - C. **Full, public disclosure on casinos.** AFT requested a report of all revenues collected and dispersed from casinos since they began operation in the state.
  - D. **Appointment of an ad hoc tax study committee.** AFT requested the creation of this non-partisan committee to study Mississippi's tax structure, compare it to that of other states, and make recommendations for change.
  - E. **Zero-based budgeting for all agencies requiring governmental allocations.**
  - F. **Practical application of the Rainy Day Fund,** tobacco money, Education Trust Fund, and any other funds held for undefined or possibly ill-defined purposes.

*I would suggest that we gather some information for the AFT and then set up a meeting with you and Maryann to discuss these matters. MDA could prepare a Nissan summary. MDOC could prepare a private prison summary and we could provide Maryann with a copy of PEER's private prison cost report. The Tax Commission can provide a summary of casino revenues. You could share your opinion regarding the last three items with Maryann during the meeting.*

3. **Call a Special Session to address the fiscal needs of public education and public agencies.** AFT passed a resolution on May 5 calling for such a Special Session to address the budget cuts to education programs in school districts and in state programs. The resolution calls for you to call a Special Session before the start of the 2001-2002 school year for the purpose of increasing revenues, sufficient to adequately fund public education and public agencies, from existing and new sources.

*You have consistently called for adequate funding of education since the conclusion of this year's session. This matter can be discussed with Maryann during the meeting discussed above.*

AFT also expressed concern regarding the following:

- Alternative schools are not effective. MDE reportedly said that the department was going to review alternative schools and make some changes, but no action has been taken. AFT is not sure hearing officers are complying with the placement laws.
- AFT does not support Dr. Richard Thompson's push for the lowering of criteria for alternate route certification. Dr. Thompson is looking for warm bodies, rather than qualified teachers.
- AFT opposes home rule and funding with no strings attached. The Legislature needs to impose a moratorium on new programs, as well as the new accountability/assessment standards, until schools are given adequate funding/resources to meet the standards.

Please advise as to the action you would like for me to take regarding these matters.  
Thanks!