

*Remarks for the
Mississippi / Alabama Letter of Agreement (Meridian)
June 12, 2003*

- This is an historic day for our two states
 - An important day for other states to take notice of
- **Mississippi and Alabama are coming together** to work toward a common goal
 - **Creation of quality jobs** for our citizens
 - We will aggressively pursue every opportunity
- When Governor Bob Riley and I last met in April, we discussed the implementation of a formal alliance to attract jobs and industries to our shared border
 - Earlier today, we signed the letter of intent to establish this alliance
- Impact of the **national recession** has affected every state
 - Mississippi and Alabama have had to change the way we do business
 - We've been forced to think outside the box / be creative
- Fiscal relief is important and welcome, but we cannot always depend on help from Washington
 - States must be willing to step out and take action
 - That's why we've developed this agreement
- Governor Riley and I are committed to crossing state and party lines with the goal of making a difference for the people of our states
 - We are going to cooperate in a dedicated effort of **economic growth**
 - We are going to change the way business is done in the south and in America
- When an industry looks to locate a new facility, they are looking for **good locations, good infrastructure, and good incentives**
 - This agreement will make them available like never before
 - This alliance is going to provide the **opportunities and the advantages** that companies look for
 - Our people are the ones who will benefit
- The bottom line in this work is focused on **improving the quality of life** for the **citizens of Alabama and Mississippi**
 - East Mississippi offers the resources – the location, the infrastructure, and most importantly, the people – to make that happen
- Steve Hale and his counterpart in Alabama, Neil Wade, have already been working together in this effort

- They will take that work to the next level
- **Selling Mississippi and Alabama to the rest of the world**

- Want to thank **Wade Jones and East Mississippi Business Development Corporation** for their dedication to growing this area of Mississippi
 - Thank **Tommy Dulaney** and business leaders from the area for their hard work and continued efforts in helping us reach potential