Remarks for the
Press Conference with Governor Riley
April 11, 2003

■ Had a good meeting this morning with Governor Riley

- o Discussed our mutual goals of creating quality jobs for our people

■ Pleased to say we are going to move forward with the implementation of a regional alliance

- o Focus on attracting jobs and industry to our shared border

■ As a result of our meeting here today, we are moving to the next step

- o Developing a formal agreement for our signatures

- Once agreement is reached, Bob Rohrlack and Neal Wade of Alabama Development Office will tour the world touting the alliance

- Impact of the national recession has hit our states hard
    - We've been forced to think and act in new and innovative ways
    - Change the way we invest in our future

- We've done it by raising our investment in education to 62 percent of our general fund

■ We've done it by passing the Mississippi Rural Economic Impact Authority to assist rural communities with economic development efforts

    o Worker training at junior and community colleges

■ We started this work three years ago with passage of Advantage Mississippi Initiative

    o Initiative provided for creation of regional economic development alliances across state lines at county/municipal levels

■ Industries are looking for best incentives to locate facilities, invest money and create jobs

- o A regional alliance like this one will be attractive to them
- o Alliance will give them strong return on investment

■ More important, alliance will improve quality of life for citizens of our states

- o That's the bottom line
- o Focus on building good schools, good jobs, good communities

■ Want to thank Governor Riley and his team for their commitment to reaching across state lines to work together on this issue

    o Also want to thank East Mississippi Business Development Corporation for their dedication to making this alliance a reality

■ Will Rogers quote: Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there

    o Mississippi and Alabama are on the right track

    o Moving forward, moving faster