

Remarks for
Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition
September 25, 2003

- It is good to be here for the Second Annual “Faith Summit” - I had the pleasure of attending last year

- Recognize
 - Rev. Ronnie Crudup- The Coalition Chairman- we appreciate your personal attention to this project.
 - spent many hours / to ensure conference is successful / and the Faith-Based Coalition is able to assist religious and community-based organizations / to help extend new opportunities for our people into every community of this state.

 - Rev. Phil Reed-Vice Chairman

 - Rev. Dolphus Weary

 - Rev. Isaiah Madison

- Rev. Thomas Jenkins
- All other Board Members for the Coalition (who will be formally installed at this luncheon)
- thanks for your generous donation of time and expertise in putting this conference together for the important discussion of faith and works that will take place over the next two days
- To everyone else gathered here for the ‘Faith Summit’ thank you for taking part in this important event
 - Your presence and involvement will ensure the Faith-Based Coalition continues to grow, diversify, and make a difference around the state
- Edward Everett Hale: “I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.”

- I don't believe Government has all the answers
 - Nor do I believe that it should
 - At times, we must turn to our churches
 - And institutions of faith to find solutions for the problems we face.

- Each of us has something to offer – to our families, to our communities, to our state

- Doesn't require a fancy title

- It requires a desire to make things better for our communities

- It requires willingness to get involved in the lives of those who are struggling around us

- It requires faith- most of all
 - Faith in those around you
 - Faith in people you may not know who are still working toward the same goals as you
 - Ultimately faith in God- to guide us all

- When Rev. Crudup called on me earlier this year, I was happy to lend my support to the Coalition's application for a federal grant through the Compassion Capitol Fund
 - We remain hopeful that this grant will be approved in order to allow the Coalition to expand its reach and provide the technical assistance that smaller faith-based organizations need to launch successful programs

- Since its inception two years ago, I have been a supporter of the Mississippi Faith-Based Coalition's work
- In fact two of the Coalitions board members are on my staff- Armerita Tell & Michael Bentley

■ I've said before that Leadership is Action not Position

■ And when someone is accessible, shares the same ideals as you, and is willing to work for the changes you believe to be necessary in uplifting those that have forgotten how it feels to be cared for- It makes all the difference

- There are people who are listening to you and want to give you the tools to build up your communities

- Words such as: “change” “Inclusion” and “Improvement” are attainable realities
 - And they are occurring in Mississippi

- I believe in the mission of the Coalition and I believe in the people of Mississippi who want to make a difference in the lives of their neighbors

- And I’m here today to let you know that my office and my administration supports your efforts to improve the quality of life for all Mississippians

- I know as you do, that God's hand has surely guided us to this place and for this purpose... and we must continue to seek his guidance, knowing that through him all things are possible

- God bless you in your future endeavors and thank you for allowing me to be part of this summit