

*Remarks for the
Mississippi Nurses Association
February 3, 2003*

- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities
- Priorities for MS / jobs and education.
- Meeting these priorities not always easy, especially in schools
- We are making a difference
 - Teacher pay from 49th to 19th
 - Computers in the Classroom / NGA says first in nation / MS “at head of wave of technological innovation”
 - MS one of six states for “Following the Leaders” / No Child Left Behind
 - Leadership Summit / six priorities from early childhood to adult learning
 - Princeton Review - #6 best testing in the nation

- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent
 - *HISTORIC ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN*
 - *UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION*
 - *THIS IS MOVING MISSISSIPPI FORWARD*
 - *LOOK FORWARD TO SIGNING BILL INTO LAW TOMORROW*

- Budget is key issue of legislative session
 - Must budget based on real numbers, not on hope
 - Recognize House and Senate for historic action
 - Funding education at 62%
 - Fully funding MAEP for the first time
 - Funds teacher pay raise
 - Addresses needs of higher education, including nursing school

- Brain trust focuses on stopping flow of best and brightest out of MS
 - 10 year commitment of \$200M matched by universities and colleges
 - Build MS's intellectual capacity / research capabilities
 - Grants for graduate assistants to stay in MS / cultivate teachers
 - More momentum for economic development

- *We've invested hundreds of millions of dollars in buildings*
 - *Time to invest in people*

- What does this investment mean for Mississippi?
 - Healthy kids go to school ready to learn
 - Healthy adults are ready to work
 - End result of good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Want to take a moment and thank you for work all of you do each day as health care professionals
 - Every day presents different challenges / different victories
 - From neonatal units to geriatric units, from emergency rooms to recovery rooms
 - You are a constant presence / you make a difference

- Difficult time in nursing profession
 - Shortage of nurses makes the job more difficult
 - Greater stress / less support
 - This shortage has not gone unnoticed

- Your commitment is focused on the challenges of the moment, but your aim is broad in its scope
 - I share that commitment and that aim with you

- There are a lot of things people said we couldn't do here
 - Raise teacher pay
 - Put computers in every classroom
 - Land a \$1.5 billion auto plant

- We've been surprising a lot of people lately / MS setting the standard
 - Refusing to settle for the status quo

- You all know what it's like to push a truck from stopped position / hard to do
 - Once rolling, easier to push

- MS used to be like a stopped truck / we put our shoulders into our work
 - Now we're moving fast
 - Need to keep momentum going / your help is important

- Will Rogers: Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there
 - MS not sitting still