

*Remarks to the  
MS School Boards Association  
February 12, 2003*

■ Recognize

- Dr. Gemma Beckley, Pres of MS School Board Assoc.
- Roosevelt Ulmer, Jr., Vice-Pres., MS School Boards Assoc. (also introduced RM)

■ Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities

■ Priorities for MS / jobs and education

■ Meeting these priorities not always easy,  
especially in schools

- Education is the priority now
  - REPRESENTS HISTORIC ACTION
  - UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION
  - MISSISSIPPI IS MOVING FORWARD
  
- Impact of national recession
  - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
  - More than two million Americans out of work
  - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs

- Effects of national recession touches everyone
  - Recession has no respect for political parties
  - Every state affected
  
- Have to deal with the impact here in MS
  - Protect people in short term / prepare for long term
  
- Best way to do that is through education
  - Everybody benefits from good schools

- Comprehensive plan for education
  - Funding education at 62%
  - Fully funding MAEP for the first time
  - Funds teacher pay raise
  - Addresses needs of higher education
  
- We are making a difference
  - Teacher pay from 49<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>
  - Computers in the Classroom/ NGA says first in the 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

- Investments in education benefit every Mississippian, not just students
  - People want to live in good communities
  - Good schools, good jobs, good communities
  
- Those are the results of good leadership
  - Those are the results our people demand and deserve
  
- The bills I signed last week fund education for one year, but the fight we fought and won, changes the way we fund education forever.

- Gone are the days when we fund education the last week of the session.
  
- Gone are the days when our school children compete for funding with convicted felons in our prisons.
  
- Gone are the days when we shortchange our schools.
  
- Gone are the days when we shortchange our future.
  
- **MISSISSIPPI HAS ENTERED A NEW ERA**