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Governor Musgrove Celebrates Water and Sewer Task Force Results

(Jackson, MS) -- Governor Ronnie Musgrove today praised the work of the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force for their efforts in the passage of five bills during the 2002 legislative session. The bills were based on recommendations made by the Task Force in a report published in November 2001.

"Last year, the recommendations of the Task Force outlined what needed to be done to ensure safe, abundant drinking water and proper wastewater treatment for our people," Musgrove said. "Each of the new laws based on their recommendations will have a positive effect on our communities and strengthen the quality of life for our people."

The bills passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor included:

- HB1077 calls for economic viability determinations to be performed by the Mississippi Public Utility Staff on new water and wastewater systems to ensure the user charge system is adequate to repay debt, operate and maintain the system, and able to provide for emergency repairs.
- HB1397 authorizes the Commission on Environmental Quality to petition a chancery court to have a chronically malfunctioning wastewater system or public water supply which is endangering public health or the environment placed into receivership under the jurisdiction of the court.
- HB1830 provides a full state match during FY2003 for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund program and the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program.
- HB936 creates a program to provide funding for loan subsidies to increase the affordability of water and wastewater systems for the customers.
- HB1663 authorizes the Mississippi Public Service Commission to include the cost of fire protection in the rate structure when requested by a water system.

"I appreciate the work done by Charles Chisholm and the members of the Water and Sewer Task Force for their great work on these bills," said Musgrove. "Their expertise and commitment has paid off."

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