

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Mississippi's Request for Federal Emergency Funds For West Nile Virus Denied**

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove announced today that Mississippi's request for federal emergency funds to combat the West Nile virus in the state has been denied. Musgrove submitted the request in a letter to President George Bush on August 16.

“It's disappointing to have this request turned down, but we will exhaust every possible source of financial support for our battle against the West Nile virus,” Musgrove said. “This decision will, in no way, cause us to let up in our efforts to protect the health of all Mississippians.”

Joe Albaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, wrote in the letter that “the authorities and capabilities that currently exist within the Department of Health and Human Services... are the appropriate avenue for addressing a West Nile virus outbreak.”

The executive director of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, Robert Latham, said it was unfortunate the request had been denied, saying that “our request was justified based on the financial impact this has had on the cities and counties of our state.”

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