

**For Immediate Release**

April 11, 2003

**Contact:**

Marsanne Golsby

225-342-9037

## **Governor Foster Announces I-59 Agreement with State of Mississippi**

(Jackson,MS) — Governor Mike Foster and Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove today announced a plan that provides residents of both states a safe entry into Mississippi in the event of a major hurricane. The I-59 Contraflow Plan provides for reverse laning to assist Louisiana residents while securing and maintaining the effective evacuation system for Mississippi coastal residents.

Adjutant General Bennett Landreneau of the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness, and Robert Latham, Executive Director of the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency coordinated the development of the plan on behalf of Governors' Foster and Musgrove. Landreneau and Latham worked with officials of both state's military, law enforcement, and transportation departments to develop the I-59 reverse laning plan that addresses multiple protection measures including shelter, food & water, health, and transportation needs.

“This plan is an effective and efficient commitment to public safety ” said Governor Mike Foster. “We are hopeful that we will never have to implement the reverse laning portion of this plan. But in the event a hurricane dictates the need for massive evacuations from the states coastal region, including New Orleans, the State of Mississippi will provide evacuation assistance to our citizens.”

The plan provides for the effective evacuation of Louisiana residents within their own state borders and into Mississippi in the event of a hurricane. The plan maximizes the use of Mississippi's resources by utilizing limited reverse laning of Interstate 59 to assist in evacuation measures when requested by the State of Louisiana without hampering the evacuation needs of Mississippi residents.

(more)

Governors' Foster and Musgrove Statements

I-59 Contraflow Plan

Page 2

“This plan promotes and provides for the safe and orderly evacuation of our neighbors in Louisiana in the event of a major hurricane,” stated Governor Ronnie Musgrove. “This protective measure accommodates the needs of our neighbors without minimizing the equally needed protection and evacuation plans for the citizens of Mississippi.”

Residents in both states are encouraged to review their household and business hurricane preparedness plans. The hurricane season begins June 1 and continues through November 30.

###