

For Immediate Release
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Governor Musgrove: Nissan Vision Now Reality for Mississippi

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove today joined Carlos Ghosn, President and Chief Executive Officer of Nissan Motor Corporation, as the first vehicle rolled off the assembly line of the Nissan facility located in Canton, Mississippi. Musgrove and Ghosn announced the location of the plant on November 9, 2000.

“When Carlos Ghosn and I first met, he shared his vision for Nissan, and I shared my vision for Mississippi,” Musgrove said. “Our visions were similar, and focused on a future built on our common promise and potential. Today, those visions have become realities.”

Under Musgrove’s leadership, the state passed the Advantage Mississippi Initiative, recognized as one of the most aggressive economic development packages in the nation and a key component in the state’s ability to land the Nissan plant.

In June 2002, Nissan announced it would expand the facility before it even opened, due to strong demand for its vehicles in North America. The expansion adds 1 million square feet to the 2.5 million square foot facility, and represents an additional investment of \$500 million. When fully operational, the \$1.4 billion facility will produce 400,000 vehicles per year and employ 5,300 people.

Musgrove hailed the opening of the plant as a signal to the rest of the world that Mississippi can compete at the highest levels.

“The rest of the world has noticed what’s happening here. The rest of the world is aware of what we can do,” he said. “The world will be watching as we continue our partnership with Nissan and the pursuit of excellence together.”

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Musgrove said the impact of the Nissan plant goes far beyond the immediate jobs created at the facility and the more than 26,000 indirect jobs expected to be created as suppliers and support industries around the state.

“The business community, both in America and around the world, realize that we have something tremendous to offer, both in our people and in our commitment to new and existing industries,” he said.

Musgrove cited recent publications touting the state’s competitiveness. *Site Selection* magazine has listed Mississippi as one of the top ten states in the nation for locating industry, and the January 2003 issue of *Expansion Management* magazine ranked four Mississippi cities in its list of the 50 hottest cities for expansions. The latest issue of *Forbes* magazine also ranked two Mississippi cities in its listing of the 150 “Best Places for Businesses and Careers.”

More than 53,000 jobs have been created at over 2,200 new and expanded facilities since Musgrove took office in January 2000. Total capital investments over the past three years total nearly \$15 billion.

“Nissan and Mississippi are working together, and we stand ready to work together with other industries as well,” Musgrove said. “Mississippi is open for business.”

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