

October 17, 2003

Mr. W.G. "Mickey" Holliman, Chair  
North Mississippi Medical Center Board  
201 South Spring Street, Suite 520  
Tupelo, Mississippi 38804

VIA FACSIMILE: (662) 844-1292

Dear Mr. Holliman:

As Governor, I am committed to work to ensure that quality, affordable health services are available to Mississippians, a goal that I am confident we share. The resolution of the contract dispute between Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi and North Mississippi Medical Center is essential to the continued provision of health services to a large region of the State. It is my view that a commitment by the parties to mediation of the matters of concern represents the best opportunity for a constructive conclusion for all those affected.

Toward that end, I have suggested below three attorneys with the requisite maturity, sophistication and competence as mediators, with the parties to select one agreeable to both.

1. David Martin, (601) 949-4901, Watkins Ludlam Stennis Winter, 633 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0427
2. Reuben Anderson, (601) 352-2300, Phelps Dunbar, 111 E Capitol Street, Suite 600, Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3066
3. James P. "Butch" Cothren, (601) 354-1115, Cothren Law Firm, 820 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1329

I would also make available to the parties conference facilities and administrative support should they so desire. I would urge that mediation of these very important issues begin as soon as practicable. Please let me know as soon as possible of your plans regarding the selection of the mediator, the schedule for mediation and any assistance you may require of my office.

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I am confident that we together will ensure continued access and affordability of healthcare in North Mississippi. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Michael Boyd, Policy & Planning Director, at (601) 942-7667.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM/mtb

cc: Richard Hale  
Gerald Wages  
Danny Spritler

Mr. Richard J. Hale,  
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