

June 3, 2003

To: Governor Musgrove

Fr:

Re: Press Conference- Commission on Revenue Estimates (CRE)

You are scheduled to hold a **press conference tomorrow, June 4 in the Woolfolk Building** to announce your proposal to form the **Revenue Estimate Advisory Commission**, which will be charged with **determining the estimated state revenue**.

Message

Your message for event is that it is imperative that the governor and Legislature work together to come up with a realistic and accurate revenue estimate. That is why you have proposed the formation of the Commission on Revenue Estimates to determine revenue estimates each year, which should be a nonpartisan process and is important so that the state can adequately fund education and other services, such as health care, without the fear of having to make mid-year cuts.

Attached Material

- Suggested Talking Points
- Possible Questions and Suggested Answers

Suggested Talking Points
Commission on Revenue Estimates (CRE)

1. Thank you for being here today. As I have said before, **the #1 reason for the decline in state revenues around the country is the national recession.**
 - A. As you all know, over the course of the past couple of years, revenue has failed to meet estimates.
 - 1) The foundation for every budget, whether it is for your family, business or the state of Mississippi, is to know how much money you have to spend.
 - 2) And although Mississippi has fared better than most other states during this time of national recession, we must do our best to determine revenue estimates that are accurate.
 - B. In the past, I have **consulted with business people and economists from around the state** who have the real-life experience and knowledge and who are qualified to help make determinations regarding the state's revenue estimates.
 - 2) And I think that this *informal* process I have used during the course of my tenure as Governor is one that **best serves the people of Mississippi who rely on the accuracy of our revenue estimates for our schools and other important services.**

2. That is why today **I am proposing the formation of the “Commission on Revenue Estimates.”**
 - A. The Commission will be **nonpartisan**, comprised of a banker, financial/investment planner, financial manager, a business owner and an economist with their doctoral degree.
 - B. The Commission will be a **geographically diverse** group of people representing the interests of Mississippians from around the state.

3. **Suggested Sound bite:**
 - C. The “**Commission on Revenue Estimates**” will be a permanent committee, **not serving the interests of any one governor, but rather serving the interests of the people of Mississippi.**

4. While our country faces a **national recession, states have had to suffer the brunt of the fiscal downturn.**
 - a. During a **national recession**, it is even more important that our **revenue estimates be realistic and accurate.**
 - b. The “**Commission on Revenue Estimates**” will help both the Legislature and the governor, regardless of who is in office at the time, to make sure that this is true.

Thank you for being here with me today.

Possible Questions and Suggested Answers

1) Governor, have you yet decided exactly who will serve on this Commission?

No. We have a list of quality Mississippians with the experience and knowledge to serve on the Commission, but at this point, we would like to work with the Legislature before we begin to specifically come up with names.

2) Wouldn't this type of Commission take away power from both the governor and the Legislature?

*Too often, the governor and legislature are unable to come to agreement on revenue estimates, which can hurt our ability to pay for education and other critical state services. This Commission will be **nonpartisan**, and will reflect the expertise of Mississippians from around the state, and will come up with a **more realistic, accurate revenue estimate**.*