

12/5/03

An open letter to the people of the State of Mississippi:

Allow me to simply say thank you. The accomplishments of the past four years, indeed all the years of my public service, could not have been achieved without the hard work of many of you and the confidence of even more. During my term as your governor, we have shared ideas and dared to dream.

Let me thank you for the opportunity to serve as Governor and thank all of those around me who worked tirelessly and often without recognition to expand educational opportunities for Mississippi's children, create economic opportunities for Mississippi's workers, and promote the health, safety and welfare of Mississippi's families and communities.

We can measure our success in real terms: 50,000 additional Mississippi children have health care insurance; our immunization rate leads the South; Nissan and related industries have been added to Mississippi's economic landscape; Mississippi is now in the top ten states for small business sustainability; Mississippi claims 4 of the top 50 hottest metro areas for expansion; nationally, Mississippi students are showing some of the greatest improvements in test scores; over the past four years, the number of failing schools dropped from 122 to seven; and the list goes on. To continue our climb, we must continue to invest in our people, especially in the education of our children, the retention of quality teachers, and the technology and tools we place at their fingertips.

Like many of you, I am living the American Dream right here in Mississippi. I can because there were people along the way who cared. Not everyone would have believed a poor boy from Panola County could one day be governor. But I had a teacher who gave me an opportunity to learn, who would not accept anything less than my best.

That is why I am a staunch supporter of Mississippi's public schools. Every child has potential and every child deserves that very same opportunity to claim a part of the American Dream. Having access a great education, opens doors to every child, regardless of race and economic background, so they can dare to dream of a future where no boundaries exist.

With vigilance and determination, let us continue to be impatient for progress and insistent on prosperity for all Mississippians. Please know that I remain eternally grateful for the opportunity to serve you and I will continue to work beside you. Working together, we make our state the greatest place in the country to live, work and raise our families. God bless you and God bless the Great State of Mississippi.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE