

February 27, 2003

Mr. Scott D. Britt
405 Burgess Point
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Dear Mr. Britt:

The attacks of September 11 left our country with a sense of uncertainty and fear. While Mississippi was geographically far from the attacks, our hearts were right there with the victims and their families. Mississippi lost two of its citizens from Durant in the attack on the Pentagon. All of us were touched on September 11 in some way, whether we personally knew someone in New York, Washington, or Pennsylvania or not.

We are a country that pulls together in times of need or crisis, and Mississippi lifted up the victims of the attacks in their prayers that day as they waited to hear the horror of what had happened. Our hearts were broken, but Mississippi does not believe that thousands of fellow Americans died in vain that day. We also do not view the World Trade Center as a place of disaster and failure. Instead, we strongly feel that the World Trade Center was built of ideas, promise, and hope. Mississippi is committed to the principles of freedom and trade on which America stands.

The attacks on our country changed our perception of the world around us. We see things less in black and white – and more in red, white and blue. Our perceptions of the world around us have changed, and priorities have been re-assessed. Despite these changes, Mississippi and the United States are marching on with a renewed determination to the principles on which our nation was founded – principles focused on freedom. They are the principles that have stood as a model for other countries to follow, and we will not allow those principles to be compromised. We believe in a freedom that allows us to express our thoughts and views without fear of retribution. We believe in a country where we can worship with the knowledge that, when we pray, we can do so with a sense of peace and comfort.

It is good for us to reflect on the days and events of September 11, 2001, but it is also important to look forward to the dreams and challenges of the years to come. We have the memories and legacies left behind by thousands of innocent people on which we can build our nation's future. We can look with pride at how our country has pulled together and kept itself going. It is work that is helping a nation heal its wounds and look to the future.

We will never forget that dreadful day in September 2001. We will never forget the thousands of heroes who died that day. We will always remember, though, what it did to our country. The awakening we had still influences us and motivates us to fight for the freedoms we have as Americans and as a country under God.

It's been said that "history balances the frustration of 'how far we have to go' with the satisfaction of 'how far we have come.'" We have indeed come a long way and accomplished great things since September 11. Mississippi is continually striving to help the country through actions and prayers in its movement for freedom.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM/JS/nb