

*Remarks for the  
Budget Press Conference  
November 5, 2001*

In the past two weeks, I've traveled across Mississippi – I've visited Greenwood, Guntown, Monticello, McLain, Richton, Rosedale and Tutwiler, just to name a few.

During these visits, I've had the opportunity to talk to the people and hear firsthand how they are dealing with the sluggish economy in our state and our nation.

I'm proud of what they're doing. They're exercising good, old-fashioned common sense; they're setting budgets and not spending more money than they have.

That's the way many of us were brought up, with our parents teaching us how to budget and spend wisely.

That's what must be done at the state level.

Earlier in the year, we tried to look ahead and plan for where we would be right now.

We believed, after meeting with Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and others, the economy would not grow more than one percent this year.

As a result of these meetings, I requested state agencies to budget only 45 percent of their appropriations for the first half of the fiscal year.

Now, with our current situation, this move has proven to be the right one.

As governor, I have a fiscal responsibility to the people of Mississippi, to provide leadership and planning for the good times as well as the bad times. It's a responsibility I have taken seriously for the past seven years, and one I won't step away from.

The people I've visited with in towns across the state recently, they weren't wealthy people. They're struggling to make ends meet, but they're doing it.

I understand what they're dealing with; I saw my share of hard times growing up. I'm applying the lessons I learned then to the situation we're facing today.

We're dealing with real numbers and real people here. They demand and deserve real solutions.

We will see they get it.