

CAPITAL PRES CORP BREIFING
January 31, 2003

■ **Education Bill**

- We have changed the way we fund education in Mississippi forever.
- As with teacher pay and computers in the classroom Mississippi is once again leading the nation.
- This is a historic day for the state of Mississippi
- We already have other states calling to ask about what we have accomplished.
- Through cooperation, hard work and dedication we have now proven to the people that we are committed to education.
- I want to thank the legislature for joining me in the fight to fund our schools.
- Good schools are important to every one
- We know that communities with good schools attract good jobs.
- Education is the foundation to building a strong community.
- The education appropriation bill gives us a strong foundation to build on.
- Mississippi now has a Schools First budget
- I will sign the bill Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

■ **Coast Doctors**

- The real issue is access to health care for the people of Mississippi
- That's why I called the special session last summer
- I met yesterday with Doctors and local leader on the Gulf Coast.
- We are working hard to find a solution to the availability and affordability of Medical Malpractice.
- I meeting with MACM this morning and requested that they reconsider....
- The solution to this crisis is a patient compensation fund

■ **Ms. Rural Impact Authority**

- Rural Mississippi has been hardest hit by the national recession.
- The Rural Impact Authority will give us the ability to help existing business and attract new jobs to those areas that need the most help

■ **Campaign Finance Report**

- I will file my report this afternoon
- I appreciate the people who have shown confidence in my administration.

- **Haley Barbour – Organizational Meetings – Are you running for re-election?**
 - I'm focused on fighting for our schools and creating jobs for the people of Mississippi. There will be time later for politics.
 - I will announce my decision at the appropriate time, however I don't think there will be any surprises.

- **Department of Labor Bill**
 - I support the creation of a Department of Labor.
 - Mississippi is the only state in the nation that does not have one
 - By combining functions that are now carried out in seven different agencies we could more efficiently serve the public and take advantage of more federal funds.

- **DHS Board Bill**
 - I have full confidence in Thelma Britian as the new Executive Director. She has over 20 years of experience.
 - What DHS needs is greater flexibility and appropriate funding not more bureaucracy

- **DHS Social Workers**
 - We are working hard to find Social Worker to hire and have hired all qualified applicants.
 - The solution will be found with greater flexibility and appropriate funding for the department.

- **Presidents State of the Union**
 - I support the Presidents efforts in the war on terrorism. (Visiting with troops this week)
 - We need an economic stimulus package that is focused on creating jobs and that gives relief to the states.
 - Most states across the nation have been hid hard by the national recession.

- **'03 Shortfall Funding**

- **Base Closure (Barry Rhodes) in Ed. Bill**

- **DOC Bennett Malone Time for Time bill**

- **Diverting TTF payment**
- **Seatbelt Primary Offense**
- **MBN Frank Melton**