

*Remarks to the
Computers in the Classroom Press Conference
February 6, 2003*

■ Recognize:

- Bob Pittman
- Jim Barksdale
- Robin Costa
- Blake Wilson
- Lavon Reed
- Dave Boliek
- Also, the following who could not attend:
 - Den Knecht, CEO of Ingalls and
Chair of Public Education Forum
 - Carolyn Shanks, CEO of Entergy

- Pleased to be here / Historic week for MS /
we are leading the nation twice in one week
- Education Funding Bill
 - Computers in the Classroom

■ Impact of national recession

- More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
- More than two million Americans out of work
- States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs

■ Effects of national recession touches everyone

- Recession has no respect for political parties
- Every state affected

■ Have to deal with the impact here in MS

- Protect people in short term / prepare for long term

- Best way to do that is through education
 - Everybody benefits from good schools

- Efforts of public, private, and nonprofit sectors to put computers in classrooms

- State Department of Education verified there are 32,354 classrooms with internet-accessible computers

- MS is first state in the nation
 - Certified by NGA

- More than 300 computers built over 5,000 computers through ExplorNet

- This initiative is just one more step in the right direction to build good schools.

- Comprehensive plan for education
 - Teacher pay
 - Test scores
 - Computers in Classroom

- Investments in education benefit every Mississippian, not just students
 - People want to live in good communities
 - Good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Legislature completely funded education and funded it early
 - Signed the bill yesterday
 - Funded it at 62 percent of general fund
 - We have proved to you that when it comes to education, we mean business
 - Business means jobs

- Action of Legislature historic
 - Strong funding of education
 - Unprecedented cooperation

- So much potential for communities statewide
 - Need to invest now to realize full promise and potential
 - Good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Those are the results of good leadership
 - Those are the results our people demand and deserve

- Encourage each of you here today to take advantage of available resources
 - Build partnerships / bring prosperity
 - Build good schools, good jobs, good communities

