

Suggested Introductory Remarks
Introducing Lt. Governor Dewhurst
Monday, June 23, 2003 approximately 7:30 p.m.
The Capitol, Austin, Texas

We have several people here tonight for whom this is your first visit to the Texas state capitol. Whether this is your first visit, your tenth visit, or whether as it is for our speaker this evening, where you come to work, I think you will have to agree on one thing — some reputations come into being because they are in fact earned, not fabricated.

That Texans are given to big bold ways of thinking and doing things — right down to the architecture and size for their State Capitol — is a reputation that's earned.

This is a magnificent State Capitol in terms of its size and its character. It is reminiscent of our nation's Capitol. When you stand at the entrance to our nation's Capitol, you are but a block away from the Rayburn Building. It's not hard to look around this Capitol and imagine Sam Rayburn as a Texas legislator honing the legislative political skills he took to Washington.

There are many people here tonight who can testify to the skills that are required to lead a legislature, to lead a Senate, or to lead a House. We could have an extensive formal introduction of our speaker, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst. But instead, let's follow the tradition of legislative leadership and cut directly to the chase. Let me share three or four things

about Lt. Governor Dewhurst that will give you some insight into his leadership in Texas.

Governor, this is probably not the introduction you would normally get. But as a former Lt. Governor, I might have a little different interpretation about the experiences in your background that predicted you would be a successful Lt. Governor and leader of the Senate.

First, Lt. Governor Dewhurst raises cattle. He would point out they are pure bred cattle, but the message here is that being in the cattle business, he is accustomed to getting small and large groups — in this case of four-legged animals — to go places and in directions that they don't necessarily want to go. Once you have mastered getting 1000 pound, four-legged creatures to go places they don't want to

go, then working with much, much smaller, two-legged senators whose ideas might not agree with yours — well this becomes much more manageable.

In addition, Lt. Governor Dewhurst is a team roper. Now imagine the possibilities when the presiding officer in the Senate has a lariat by his side. If senators start to “get off the ranch,” so to speak, they can be roped and brought back into the fold. Now I’m not saying that has actually ever happened here in the Senate chamber. But just the possibility would have to give the Lt. Governor an edge in his negotiations with senators.

You might imagine that Lt. Governor Dewhurst has other experiences that have prepared him for his leadership position in Texas. He is a successful

business leader in Houston. He can talk with you just as knowledgeably about electric cogeneration as about pure bred cattle.

Lt. Governor Dewhurst experience has also included state-level government leadership. He was commissioner of the Texas General Land Office and he served as chairman of the Governor's Task Force on Homeland Security.

It's difficult to imagine any more serious business than dealing with homeland security issues and terrorism. But in the 2003, Lt. Governor Dewhurst tackled an issue that in many ways may be as difficult. I'm talking about school finance. Texas does not have a monopoly on school finance issues,

but the size and the intensity of the issue in Texas has drawn national attention.

And when Texans speak of “Robin Hood,” they are not likely to be talking about a merry band from Sherwood Forest. If you are not familiar with the Texas “Robin Hood,” I suspect Lt. Governor Dewhurst will enlighten us shortly.

Lt. Governor David Dewhurst, it’s an honor for us to be here tonight in this beautiful Capitol, in this splendid Senate chamber, and for you to share with us your perspective on an important issue that will help determine the future of Texas. Join me in welcoming Lt. Governor David Dewhurst.