

*Remarks for the
Fiscal Panel Discussion at DFA
April 3, 2002*

Good afternoon. I'm glad to welcome you to today's panel discussion, but this event is about more than just a history of Mississippi's fiscal environment.

From the conversion of the Fiscal Management Board to the development of today's Department of Finance and Administration, there have been many accomplishments and we are here to honor those accomplishments.

I'd like to recognize the governors here with us today – Governor Allain, Governor Mabus, welcome. I think you both would agree that selecting people to run state agencies can be a difficult and challenging decision.

One of the most important decisions a governor can make is to appoint the executive director of the Department of Finance and Administration; the role of this department is crucial to the successful management of state government.

We have a history of conservative fiscal management in Mississippi. “AA” bond ratings and awards for excellence in financial reporting for 15 consecutive years are strong indicators of our fiscal prudence and commitment to managing the state’s finances with integrity.

Today, this panel will cover a broad range of topics about Mississippi’s fiscal environment, the role of the fiscal officer and the budget process.

It will also honor those who have served this department well. To the former directors, and to Gary Anderson, thank you for your dedicated service. Mississippi is better off because of the difference you have all made. Thank you.