

*Remarks for the
Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Press Conference
June 26, 2001*

Thank you all for coming this afternoon.

Today, I'm pleased to announce that Mississippi is joining the ranks of states implementing the Electronic Benefit Transfer, or EBT, system for food stamp and TANF recipients.

This system will provide recipients with a plastic card, much like a debit card, for purchasing groceries or receiving benefits through TANF.

This is a win-win situation for those on assistance and the state. Both will enjoy greater convenience and security in handling transactions associated with food stamps and TANF benefits. Further, it provides a better way of doing business for the retailers.

I'm proud that Mississippi is also one of only four states to have an approved contract for statewide implementation of the EBT system.

Lockheed Martin has been awarded the contract to develop this electronic delivery system. Through their expertise and the support from the Mississippi Department of Human Services, I know this program will be a great success.

I'm proud of the work being done to help those in need – to help them take another step toward a life of dignity and self-sufficiency.

The EBT system will play a major role in that effort, and I am confident we will see positive results from its use.

Simply put, the EBT system is another aspect of our work to accomplish good things for the people of Mississippi.

And now I'm pleased to introduce the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Janice Broome Brooks....

Closing Remarks

As you can see, the EBT system will serve Mississippi and its people well. From the recipient to the retailer to the state, this system will offer a new level of service to all parties involved.

The people of Mississippi deserve our best efforts, and that is what we're doing through the EBT system.

Thank you, and we'll take a few questions.