

*Remarks to the
Education Bills Signing
February 5, 2003*

- Thank you for being here on this
HISTORIC day
 - We have transformed an obstacle into an opportunity for every Mississippian
 - The greatness of this day will be realized for generations to come

- First, I would like to recognize
 - Legislative Leaders
 - Dr. Henry Johnson
 - Dr. Wayne Stonecypher, Comm. Coll.
 - Dr. David Potter, IHL
 - Representatives of our schools, universities and their governing boards

- Now, I would like to introduce Lt. Governor Amy Tuck, Speaker of the House Tim Ford, and Governor William Winter for remarks.

- 28 days ago, during my State of the State address, I challenged the legislature to join me in the fight to make education our top priority.

- I asked the legislature to fund education at 62% and to fund it early

- Education is the priority now
 - REPRESENTS HISTORIC ACTION
 - UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION
 - MISSISSIPPI IS MOVING FORWARD

■ 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

- Comprehensive plan for education
 - Funding education at 62%
 - Fully funding MAEP for the first time
 - Funds teacher pay raise
 - Addresses needs of higher education

- We are making a difference
 - Teacher pay from 49th to 19th
 - Computers in the Classroom/ NGA says first in the nation/ MS “at head of wave of technological innovation”
 - MS one of six states for “Following the Leaders”/ No Child Left Behind
 - Leadership Summit/six priorities from early childhood to adult learning
 - Princeton Review - #6 best testing in the nation

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

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

- The bills I'm about to sign fund education for one year, but the fight we fought and won, changes the way we fund education forever.

- Gone are the days when we fund education the last week of the session.

- Gone are the days when our school children compete for funding with convicted felons in our prisons.

- Gone are the days when we shortchange our schools.

- Gone are the days when we shortchange our future.

■ TODAY MISSISSIPPI ENTERS A NEW ERA

(SIGN THE BILLS)