

*Remarks to the  
28<sup>th</sup> Annual Election Commissioners of Mississippi Convention  
January 24, 2003*

- Pleased to be here / welcome you to 28<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Elections Commissioners of MS  
Convention
- Recognize Charles Phillips – president
- Impact of national recession
  - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock  
market
  - More than a 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
  - Teacher pay
  - Test scores
  - Computers in Classroom

- Time to go to next level
  - Summer Start program / reduce drop-out rates and increase skills
  - Save the state millions
  
- \$200 million “brain trust”
  - Recruit best minds for research, development, workforce training
  
- Investments in education benefit every Mississippian, not just students
  - People want to live in good communities
  - Good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Have called on Legislature to fund education in one comprehensive bill
  - Fund it at 62 percent of general fund
  - Time to prove to you that when it comes to education, we mean business
  - Business means jobs
  
- Action of Legislature historic
  - Strong funding of education in one bill
  - Unprecedented cooperation
  
- Have continued to create quality jobs during national recession
  - Nearly 50,000 new jobs in past three years / \$13.5 billion invested

- Building jobs across the spectrum
  - Nissan = \$1.5 billion investment / more than 5,000 direct jobs
  - MS also one of top 10 states for small business survival
  
- We have the right policies and programs in place to attract business / grow MS
  - Economic development is economic development
  - 2 people in a truck or 5,000 building a truck
  
- Have to create opportunities across the board
  - Rural areas hit hardest by NAFTA
  - Have to be smart and aggressive in creating jobs

- Communities have valuable assets to build on
  - Key is to identify assets
  - Develop plans to take advantage of them
  
- MS Rural Economic Impact Authority
  - Assistance to new and existing business
  - Training for people who have lost jobs
  
- 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 – good homes

