

Energy Crisis Press Conference  
Monday, January 8, 2001  
Hinds County Human Resource Agency  
3:00 p.m.

Governor – express compassion and emotion when you are talking and interacting with people at this press conference. Speak in low tones.

**Talking Points**

- We are blessed today to have such wonderful weather.
- It is a welcomed break from the cold, winter days we have been experiencing for the last month, or more.
- As has been reported, Mississippi has experienced record low temperatures.
- It has been the coldest winter in years.
- Most of us have had to take extra measures just to stay warm this winter.
- The state of Mississippi joins other states across the nation who are reeling from high energy bills caused by the energy crisis.
- The rising use of natural gas, and rising costs, have placed a hardship on our people.

- High energy bills affect every Mississippian.
- Many families are having to decide between cutting back on their grocery money or paying their energy bills.
- We don't want Mississippians to have to make a choice between food, medicine or heat.
- We can help, and we are going to help.
- We have received \$6 million in federal dollars available since December of 2000 to help individuals and families across our state, and this money will be available through March 2001.
- With these funds, we can assist our people who are struggling to keep the heat on in their homes.
- We will do everything we can to keep Mississippians warm this winter.
- Today 20,000 blankets will be distributed across the state to Mississippians who need them the most.

- We are taking care of our elderly - our disabled – our children – our families.
- I want to thank the Mississippi Department of Human Services, the Division of Community Services at DHS, and the energy vendors who have come together to help.
- We also thank all the energy vendors for their support and cooperation as we work together to insure that low-income Mississippians have access to affordable energy.
- I would like to ask Janice Broome Brooks, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services to give you specific information about the financial energy assistance for Mississippians.