

*Remarks to the
Governors Alliance for Regional Excellence
July 19, 2001*

(Thank Mayors Rout and Herenton)

(Recognize Governors Huckabee and
Sundquist)

Two years ago, we realized that we couldn't go back and make a brand new start for this region. But, we realized that we could work together and make a brand new ending.

Simply put, we can't change history but we can sure change the future.

I am proud of the work that has been done over the past two years to reach this point.

We are closer than ever to realizing the true potential of this area; now let's make it happen.

We've known for some time what we have here, in terms of geography, workforce, and talent.

We've known that our people can compete with anyone, anytime, anywhere.

We're building up our infrastructure, as evidenced by the joint effort with the Chickasaw Trail Industrial Park, in Marshall County, Mississippi, and Fayette County, Tennessee.

This cooperative effort has the potential to create tremendous economic development growth for the region.

In Mississippi, we have also formed a steering committee charged with developing a new vision and strategy for the Delta region.

The work of this committee has the potential to positively affect the growth of this region for the benefit of Mississippi, as well as Tennessee and Arkansas.

The success of our efforts here today and over the past months is based on one main word – alliance. It is the shared sense of partnership and belief in what can be done here that will make the difference.

This region of America shares a history like none other in the country. We have a common foundation, and on that we must build a common vision.

The boundaries between Arkansas,
Tennessee and Mississippi are blurred when
it comes to realizing our potential. Let's
share our strengths, bolster our weaknesses,
and lift this region up to the level of
performance we know it can achieve.

Some people dream about success, while
others wake up and work hard at it.

I am proud of the great effort that has been put out by the steering committee, as well as the cooperation between the states.

Our three states have woken up. We have worked hard. And, we'll be successful.

Thank you for your good work.