

*Remarks to the  
11<sup>th</sup> Annual Affordable Housing Conference  
January 22, 2003*

- Pleased to be here / welcome you to 11<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Affordable Housing Conference
  
- More than ever, believe home ownership is  
major part of American dream
  - Difficult economic times putting strains  
on individuals / families
  - Not always easy to get into a home
  
- Proud of programs such as “Get on Track”  
program through MS Home Corporation
  - Helping American dream become reality  
for more Mississippians

- Targets low to moderate income families / people with credit problems
  - Strong partnership between MS Home Corporation / Freddie Mac
  - First of its kind in the nation
  
- Important for people to have hope and a home
  - A home protects and shelters dreams
  - I want that for all Mississippians, especially now

- 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 hit the just and the unjust
  - 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
  
- Yesterday's action in 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
  
- Resources are available for communities
  - “Resource Roundtable” segment of this symposium will outline them
  - Working to develop another resource

- 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