

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
Annual Membership Meeting
Tuesday, October 17, 2000
11:30 a.m.
LaFont Inn (Main Dining Room), Pascagoula, MS

Opening

- Good Afternoon
- Thank Terry Carter, Pres. & CEO, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
- It is a pleasure to be here today

Main Points

1. State Budget
 - a. A Progressive approach to budgeting
 - i. More accountable with fewer excuses
 - ii. Making basic changes to the way we develop the budget for the State
 - iii. First time to present our budget to the Committee at the beginning of the budget process vs. at the end of the process by former Governors
 - iv. A complete budget that is accountable and meets the needs of the people

- b. Priorities of the Budget
 - i. Education is one of the top priorities
 - 1. Recommendations submitted are pro-education
 - a. Teacher pay raises
 - b. Fully funding the adequate education program
 - c. Scholarship funds for teachers
 - ii. Health Insurance
 - 1. Recommended that \$5 million be spent to offset health insurance costs
 - a. Crucial that people don't experience a reduction in medical coverage
 - b. Funds to replace money used for Medicaid services
- c. Responsibility of Agency Directors
 - i. Give them the flexibility to evaluate programs, question procedures and make tough decisions
 - ii. The budget in it's current form, ties the hands of the people who manage the departments
 - iii. Giving agency directors the authority to shift money within the dept. according to needs of our people

iv. Agency directors know what programs are the most effective and help the greatest number of Mississippians

2. Economic Development

a. Plan not updated in 11 years

b. Now it is

i. Sound/Comprehensive

ii. Variety of Incentives

c. Now MS has a management tool to sell the state

i. Designed by business leaders across the state and noted E.D. experts throughout the nation

ii. Had the strong support of business people and local developers

1. They knew how important it was for our plan to pass and become reality

iii. We are in direct competition with our sister states

d. The plan helps those communities that have not prospered

i. Gives opportunities for all cities/counties

ii. Begin using immediately

- iii. Sends a signal to the nation –
Serious about Business
- iv. A Marketing Plan being developed
to sell the state
- e. More, higher paying jobs for people of
Mississippi
 - i. Competing with other states for
those jobs
 - ii. We now have a competitive
advantage
 - iii. Creates a better Quality of Life for
every person in all 82 counties
- f. Key elements of the Package
 - i. Name Change
 - 1. Mississippi Development
Authority
 - ii. Ace Fund
 - iii. Regional Economic Development
Act
 - iv. Mississippi Advantage Jobs Act
 - 1. Allows qualifying businesses
to receive up to 4% of their
employee's wages back at the
end of each quarter as a rebate
from MS Tax Comm.
 - v. Growth & Prosperity Act
 - 1. 10-year exemptions
(including school taxes) to

qualifying companies locating
in designated counties

vi. Tax Credit Amendments

1. Mixture of tax credit

incentives targeting high-tech,
research and higher paying
jobs

vii. Workforce Training & Retraining

1. Allows flexibility for the state

to make multi-year
commitments for workforce
training and retention support

3. Fast Forward Mississippi

a. Eases transition from School-to-Careers

b. Helps students from kindergarten to
college age and beyond to realize the
world of career opportunities that await
them

c. With Fast Forward Mississippi

i. Can learn about career options

ii. Research facts on different careers

iii. Educational choices

iv. Technical skills

v. Training options

d. Utilizes the Internet and web technology

i. Creates a one-stop resource for
students, parents and teachers

- ii. www.FastForwardMS.com
- iii. Targets students of all ages

Closing

- We are providing the tools to our students for a successful future
- Parents, educators and legislators must all work together
- Mississippi's children are our future
- They will provide for us one day
- We must make sure they are capable for their future
- A Bright Future for all Mississippians