

*Remarks for the
MASS / Alliance Legislative Conference
December 6, 2002*

- Recognize Thomas Prine / Major General Lipscomb / General Berry
 - Want to take a moment to thank you for support of National Guard in schools
 - MS has best guard in the country, and your support has helped them grow at a record pace

- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities

- Priorities for MS / jobs, security, health care, and education.

- Meeting these priorities not always easy, especially in schools

- Story of mother waking her son
 - After 8am, son still in bed / mother beats on the door – late for school!
 - Not going to school, son says / no one likes me, always picking on me and making fun of me – never going to school again
 - 2 reasons you're going, mother says: one, you're 40 years old; two, you're the principal

- I appreciate you all getting out of bed each day
 - We all have work to do together

- Determined to make a difference in the educational system of this state
 - Teacher pay from 49th to 19th / many of you here going into education
 - Making commitment today for your career tomorrow
 - Computers in the Classroom / NGA says first in nation / difference between being wired and being connected
 - MS one of six states for "Following the Leaders" / No Child Left Behind
 - Leadership Summit / six priorities from early childhood to adult learning

- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent

- Budget will be key issue of upcoming legislative session
 - Must budget based on real numbers, not on hope

- My budget fully funds the teacher pay raise, restores the MAEP to FY04 funding level, and replaces one time money put into adequate education

- Brain trust focuses on stopping flow of best and brightest out of MS
 - 10 year commitment of \$200M matched by universities and colleges
 - Build MS's intellectual capacity / research capabilities
 - Grants for graduate assistants to stay in MS / cultivate teachers
 - More momentum for economic development

- *We've invested hundreds of millions of dollars in buildings*
 - *Time to invest in people.*

- Creating jobs is trademark of administration
 - Building a future through quality education is personal passion
- Commitment is focused, but aim is broad

- *Bottom line: We shortchange education, we shortchange our future*

- There are a lot of things people said we couldn't do here
 - Raise teacher pay
 - Put computers in every classroom
 - Land a \$1.5 billion auto plant

- We've been surprising a lot of people lately

- Will Rogers: Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there
 - MS not sitting still