

*Remarks for the  
McComb Mill Ribbon Cutting and Open House  
February 19, 2003*

- Recognize Mayor Walman, Todd Whitley,  
Tazwell Bowsky
  
- Pleased to be here today for this great  
announcement
  - Congratulate Todd Whitley on  
commitment to doing business in MS  
and helping 80 good people keep good  
jobs

- Tough time in MS and nation / impact of national recession
  - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
  - More than two million Americans out of work
  - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs
  
- Effects of national recession touches everyone
  - 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 creating jobs and investing in education
  - Everybody benefits from good schools
  
- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent
  - *HISTORIC ACTION THAT WAS TAKEN*
  - *UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION*
  - *WAS A HISTORIC DAY WHEN SIGNED EDUCATION BILLS*

- Time to prove to people of MS we're serious about education
  - Make the investment now for dividends tomorrow
  
- When it comes to education, we mean business
  - Business means jobs
  
- MS Rural Economic Impact Authority
  - \$20M to help with economic development in rural areas
  - Funding to cover workforce training at community colleges

- MS's potential not exclusive to metropolitan areas
  - Promise of our people is just as strong in rural areas
  - Fighting to bring quality jobs to every Mississippian
  
- Economic development is economic development
  - Doesn't matter if it's two people in a truck or 5,000 people building a truck
  
- We have to look to the future of MS / where do we want to go?
  - Good schools / good jobs / good communities

- Appreciate dedication of Todd Whitley and McComb Mills to helping build this future
  - This is good news for McComb and Pike County
  - This is good news for MS
  
- Will Rogers quote: Even if on right track, will get run over if you just sit there
  - MS is on the right track, and we're moving