

*Remarks for  
Military Voter Registration and Absentee voting Press Conference  
October 9, 2003*

- Today many of our nations soldiers remain on the battlefield
  - Defending the freedom of those of us here at home.
  
- Many Mississippians remain on the frontline today
  - Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle.
  
- 4,700 Mississippi men and women / stepped forward from the national guard and reserves

- Countless men and women in the active duty military that call Mississippi home
  - putting their lives on the line
  - protect our great nation
  - preserve our freedoms
  
- nation and our state owes a deep gratitude / men and women
  - dedication and determination / defense of the greatest nation
  
- America is the greatest nation in the history of mankind, and nothing will change that.
  
- America is not just a country, it is an ideal, it is a principle.

- Jonathan Lambert, a US Marine from Booneville who gave his life in Iraq, said it best in a letter he wrote to his hometown paper about the job our soldiers do:
  - “We know that this is more than a job, we do it for our children, grandchildren, friends and family.”
  
- These men and women have volunteered to fight to protect our democracy.
  - At the foundation of that democracy is the right to vote.
  - It is up to us to do all that is in our power to make sure that right is protected for them.

- In 2000 I supported and signed the Mississippi Military Voting law, H.B. 765, which was recommend by Secretary of State Eric Clark and passed by the legislature.
  
- Today, at my direction, Dr. Clark promulgated an emergency administrative rule relaxing the deadline for voter registration and absentee voting for the men and women from Mississippi who are serving in the armed forces.

- Under this rule Mississippians who are away from their homes defending our country will be given an extra 16 days to register to vote and their absentee ballots may be received as late as 7:00 p.m. on election day.
- This extra time will help ensure that these brave men and women are given every opportunity to exercise their right to vote.
- I would like to thank Dr. Clark for his help in making this happen today and for his dedication to making certain that every vote counts.
- Introduce General Lipscomb
- Answer any questions

## NOTES FOR Q and A

Leslie Scott will be there to answer technical voting questions, along with David Blount

- Current law requires registration 30 days before election.
- Voter registration deadline under today's rule is October 21 or 14 days before election day.
- Current law requires absentee ballots to be received the day before the election.
- Absentee ballot deadline under today's rule is Tuesday, November 4 at 7:00 p.m.