

Mississippi State Flag and Coat-of-Arms
Press Conference
Friday, May 5, 2000
4:00 p.m.

Talking Points

- Good Afternoon.
- Thank you for being here.
- I have just issued an executive order, which creates a time-limited commission for the purpose of proposing a design for the State Flag and the State Coat-of-Arms.
- The commission will consist of 17 people who represent a broad base of the people of the State of Mississippi.
- The commission members will be
 - three members of the Mississippi House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker
 - three members of the Mississippi Senate appointed by the Lt. Governor
 - eleven members appointed by the Governor
 - two representatives from the field of education

- a representative from the Mississippi Economic Council
 - a representative from the Mississippi Arts Commission
 - a representative from the Archives and History Board
 - three representatives from Business and Industry
 - three members at-large
- I have spoken with the Lt. Governor and the Speaker of the House and they are both in full support of this action.
 - The commission members will be appointed by July 1st of this year and will make their recommendations regarding the State Flag and the State Coat-of-Arms on or before May 4, 2001 to the Governor, Lt. Governor and Speaker for presentation to the legislature.
 - We feel that the creation of this commission and the purpose of the commission is in the best interest of the people of our state.

- The step we are taking today will establish recommendations for consideration by the 2001 legislature.
- The State flag and coat-of-arms currently in use will remain in use until the time that the Mississippi Legislature considers the report of the commission and has had ample time to react.

Q and A

Question – Do you think the flag should be changed?

Answer - The commission is being created so that we have a strong range of ideas and thoughts about both the state flag and the coat-of-arms. I do not want to influence the commission members one way or another. We will rely on the commission members for their recommendations.

Q – How did you decide on who would serve on the commission?

A – The commission will consist of legislators, educators, business people, a representative from the arts commission, Archives and History and others who are yet to be decided. We will have a commission that reflects the make up of our state.

Q – Is this a black/white issue? Is this a heritage issue?

A – No. This is an issue that affects all Mississippians. The state flag and coat-of-arms represent our state and they should be reflective of our state.

Q – You have not answered questions about the flag before. Why now

A – I have answered questions about the flag before. The step we are taking today will establish recommendations for consideration by the 2001 legislature.