

*Remarks for the
Mississippi Home Corporation Press Conference
August 14, 2001*

Good afternoon. Today I am proud to make an announcement that will help individuals and families across Mississippi make the step that is all too often only dreamt of – owning their own home.

To make this happen, Mississippi Home Corporation is issuing \$26 million in “below market-rate” mortgage funds through the Mortgage Revenue Bond program.

Out of this bond issue, \$23 million will provide working families in Mississippi with a 3 percent cash advance to assist with origination fees, down payments and closing costs.

However, this particular bond issue also has three components that make it unique.

One of them comes right on the heels of the passage of a historic teacher pay raise, and that is the Housing Assistance for Teachers program.

Under this program, grants are made to certified public school teachers who agree to teach in an area with a critical teacher shortage.

Such areas are determined by the language in the Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Act of 1998, and funds are used for down-payments and closing costs.

To date, over 94 percent of these loans were successful in keeping teachers in critical areas.

Next is the “Mississippi Home of Your Own” program, which is managed by the Institute for Disability Studies at the University of Southern Mississippi with funding from the Mississippi Development Authority.

This grant program helps persons with physical and mental challenges reach the dream of owning and maintaining their own home.

The third program helps Mississippians in more rural areas also realize the dream of owning a home. Through the U. S.

Department of Agriculture Rural

Development, we are able to utilize federal funds so individuals can get a mortgage without a down-payment.

These mortgage revenue bonds not only help dreams come true for Mississippi families, they also have an economic impact.

The last issue by the Mississippi Home Corporation of \$60 million, done in February, has helped more than 700 families get a home. It created more than 120 construction jobs and over \$2.5 million in construction wages.

At least \$109,000 in local property taxes was generated, along with over \$2 million in sales tax revenue from purchases related to homeownership.

This new bond issue is expected to help 350 families, creating more than 81 construction jobs and over \$1.5 million in construction wages.

These bonds are not a debt to the state, and the state does not pay them off. They are a tremendous resource for the people of Mississippi, they create jobs and tax revenue, and most importantly, they help meet a basic human need.

To give a few more details on the three pilot programs, I'd like to turn things over to Ms. Dianne Bolen, Executive Director of the Mississippi Home Corporation. Dianne?