

- Recognize President Lester Newman / dignitaries

- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities

- Priorities for Mississippi = education / jobs
 - All key to improving state's image

- Our shared work is another reason Mississippi is taking on a different image
 - Image of a state moving faster than anyone else into the 21st century
 - A state that's competing and leading in the global marketplace

- A state that's setting new standards in education and economic development

- In today's economy, Mississippi is like many other states

- Every state impacted by national recession
 - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
 - More than 2 million Americans out of work
 - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs
 - Rockefeller Institute: Recession is number one reason for decline in revenues

- Have to protect people in the short term while preparing for the long term
 - Best way to do that is through investing in education and jobs
 - Healthy kids go to school ready to learn
 - Healthy adults are ready to work

- Education as priority
 - Public schools are cornerstones of our communities and a key to successful economy

- Mississippi is a recognized leader in education
 - Teacher pay / 49th to 19th when fully implemented
 - Princeton Review: 12th best testing system in nation
 - Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind” / USA Today article
 - Computers in the Classroom

- We’re proving to the people of Mississippi, and the rest of the nation, that we’re serious about education
 - Making the investment now for dividends tomorrow

- When it comes to education, we mean business
 - Business means jobs

- Another image of Mississippi that's changing
 - No longer a state that depends solely on agriculture / low wage jobs
 - We are aggressive about creating quality, high-paying jobs for our people

- Strong growth over past 3 years
 - Over 2,200 new and expanded facilities
 - More than 53,000 new jobs
 - Total business investment in Mississippi nearly \$15 billion

- Opening of Nissan last Tuesday
 - Only auto plant opening in America this year
 - \$1.4 billion investment by Nissan
 - 5,300 direct jobs / 26,000 indirect jobs

- Not just changing economic landscape of Mississippi
 - Changing economic landscape of our people

- That new landscape offers a brighter picture for hard-working Mississippians and their families
 - Helps put food on the table / clothes on the back
 - Also helps put a roof over the head

- When we help create quality, high-paying jobs for our people, we help them with another part of the American Dream
 - Owning their own home

- Job creation is a foundation for helping make this happen
 - At the state level, also committed to offering resources to help the process

- Through Mississippi Development Authority and its HOME program, we are working to help make home ownership a reality

- Since 2000, we've made a difference
 - 64 home owner rehabilitation projects to help bring homes up to building standards
 - 18 new construction projects to help with construction / rehabilitation of multi-family units
 - 35 home buyer assistance projects, providing financial assistance for down payments or closing costs on a home
 - 26 projects where we've helped non-profits build decent, safe and affordable housing

■ All told, more than 6,000 Mississippians have benefited from these programs

- Our people / our children living in better, safer homes

■ Clifton Taulbert story

■ In the end, all our work is focused on the future of Mississippi and one simple question

- What do we want?
- Good schools / good jobs / good communities

■ ***Read Home Ownership Month proclamation***