

National Blue Ribbon Schools Conference
Thursday, November 30, 2000
6:20 p.m.
Beau Rivage Hotel

Opening

- Good Evening
- (Thank the Indian Princess for her introduction, her name was not given)
- I want to personally welcome everyone to Mississippi, America's State of Promise

Main Points

1. Strong economic development begins with a strong education
 - a. Good education = Good jobs
 - i. Good high paying jobs
 - b. Business and industry are looking for a strong workforce
 - i. Well educated and skilled people
 - ii. Training and Retraining programs
 - iii. We, the citizens of MS, must be ready (educated & trained) to work for these high tech companies
 - c. That strong education begins in K-12

- i. Good teachers
 - 1. Competitive salaries
 - a. Helps recruit students into teaching field
 - b. Keeps good teachers in the classroom
- ii. Computers in the classroom
 - 1. Internet-accessible computers
 - 2. Task Force – goal end of 2002

2. Showing Leadership

- a. By forming common objectives and by seeing beyond the politics of self-imposed borders and finding consensus, MS can compete successfully against our neighboring states and against countries around the globe.
- b. We are creating the right climate for economic growth by improving infrastructure and institutions, establishing rules and incentives that encourage productivity and implementing positive, long-term processes.
- c. When we talk about infrastructure, we must be mindful that bringing transportation resources to a company's door means more than simply providing a way to move physical goods.

- d. Infrastructure efforts must also focus on the transportation of high speed data with broadband Internet access provided in concert with expanded physical transportation resources.
 - i. Working with MCI WorldCom to provide broadband Internet access to every community in MS
- e. We must go about it in the right way.
 - i. By working together
 - ii. By building consensus
 - iii. By getting rid of our own agendas
 - iv. By working for the good of our people

3. Nissan Motor Company

- a. Their investment in MS means more jobs for our people
 - i. 4000 new jobs
 - ii. 26,000 spin-off jobs
- b. \$930 million investment in the State of Mississippi
- c. It is also further recognition that we have the quality workforce, workforce training programs and commitment to business growth that it takes to be competitive and successful

- i. A vote of confidence in the people of our state
 - ii. Nissan has shown their faith in the state of MS
- d. Getting to that point was a team effort on all levels
- e. Because of the hard work of many individuals and agencies, we are able to celebrate the arrival of this new company to MS.
- f. Our state is poised to make huge gains in creating quality jobs, expanding the resources of existing MS businesses and attracting the interest of national and international companies
- g. We have worked hard enough in 10 months of our administration to put MS on the map for a large company to consider us for a possible locations site
- h. By making dramatic changes in our economic strategy, we made MS competitive with other states
- i. Now our job is spreading the word that MS has the right incentives and the right workforce to help make companies successful
- j. Good jobs and a good quality of life make a positive difference to our state

Closing

- We will continue improve the quality of education in Mississippi
- We will continue to recruit great teachers and keep the great educators we already have
- We want our people to build their lives and raise their families in Mississippi
- Now have the climate to make that happen in Mississippi
- Success will take leadership, vision and a solid direction
- The people of MS have our pledge to make their quality of life better
- Once again Welcome to Mississippi!