

**TALKING POINTS FOR GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
SOUTHERN GROWTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2002**

Release of the Southern Innovation Index

- I have had the opportunity to be involved with the *Invented Here* project for a couple of years now, first as Chairman of the Southern Technology Council and now as Chairman of Southern Growth. As most of you know, this is a long-term project intended to support our efforts to use technology and innovation to create economic opportunities for our citizens. The project grew out of discussions within the STC and the concerns that members had about our need to think strategically, to match our aspirations with our appropriations, and to measure both our intentions and our performance. The work that has been done by the Council and the Southern Growth staff on *Invented Here* has already inspired a series of state level responses. Several states have created new strategic technology initiatives and a number have begun to create state-specific indices. I'm proud to report that this past year Mississippi released the first *Mississippi Innovation Index—a Tool to Measure, Monitor and Promote Progress*. Our *Index* was motivated in part by what we saw emerging with the *Southern Innovation Index* and it was designed to work hand in hand with the regional effort. (Governor Musgrove can expand this to say anything he wants to about the *Mississippi Innovation Index*).
- One of the most exciting developments that we have seen as the *Southern Innovation Index* was developed is the response of Southern Growth's other standing advisory councils. There have now been discussions in the Global Strategies Council, the Council for a New Economy Workforce, and the Council on the Southern Community about creating similar indices to measure progress in those areas. Among the long-term results that we expect to see is an active, up-to-date Web-based resource that will put all this information on plans and progress for all of our states in one place. With all four indexes in place, you would see a couple of hundred indicators of our progress and a couple of hundred long-term targets established by each of our states. That will really help us understand where we are and where we want to go as a region.
- One of the major findings in the publication of the *Southern Innovation Index* is that we have a historic shortage of industry-performed R&D in the South. Although we will be talking more about R&D in the session that follows this Southern Growth meeting, I think it's important to emphasize the importance of this finding. If we are going to build a southern economy that is as dynamic and diverse as what we envision, we simply must focus on building R&D capacity in every one of our states. I know that the STC has begun to talk about what it will take to accomplish that, and I want to encourage them to come back to us with some new, visionary strategies for building that capacity.

- As I moved from Chairman of the Southern Technology Council to Chairman of Southern Growth Policies Board, I was pleased to be able to hand the STC reins to my colleague, the Honorable Mark Warner. Governor, although I know you're just getting settled into this new role, we have you center-stage for this meeting. I'd like to call on you now to report on the activities of the Southern Technology Council and to talk about the release of the *Southern Innovation Index*.