

*Remarks for the
Mississippi Association of Supervisors Minority Caucus Annual Education Conference
March 29, 2003*

■ Recognize Robert Norvel

■ Gettysburg story

■ Image of MS in 2003 far different than the
image most know

- Moving faster than anyone else into the
21st century
- Competing and leading in the global
marketplace
- Setting new standards for education and
economic development

- Mississippi is a recognized leader in education
 - Teacher pay / 49th to 19th when fully implemented
 - Princeton Review: 6th best testing system in nation
 - Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind” / USA Today article
 - 6th in the nation in National Board Certified Teachers

- We’re proving that we’re serious about education
 - Making the investment now for dividends tomorrow
 - 62 percent of general fund

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

- Time to change another image of Mississippi
 - No longer a state that depends on agriculture / low wage jobs
 - We are aggressive about creating quality, high-paying jobs for our people

- We gained the attention of companies around the world when we landed Nissan
 - Now more than ever, Mississippi is being visited by companies

- In the middle of national recession, we've had several companies just this week visiting sites across the state

- They are coming to Mississippi because the word is out about what we can do
 - Site Selection magazine: Mississippi ranked as Top 10 location for new companies
 - One of top 10 states for small business survival
 - Expansion magazine: 4 Mississippi cities ranked in latest survey of 50 hottest American cities for expansion or location of facilities

- When businesses read these industry publications, they see that Mississippi has something to offer
 - They realize the image has changed

- The image of the Mississippi of 2003 is unlike anything anyone could have imagined
 - It's an image of people working in highly-skilled, well-paying jobs
 - It's an image of children in classrooms equipped with the technology to bring the world to their desk
 - It's an image of global companies looking for a place to do business in the state

- It's an image that you're helping to build every day through your work
 - Thank you for your commitment and dedication to building a better Mississippi
 - Building good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Best wishes for a successful conference