

*Remarks for the  
Two Rivers Gala  
April 5, 2003*

- Image of MS in 2003 far different than the image most know
  - Moving faster than anyone else into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  - Competing and leading in the global marketplace
  - Setting new standards for 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
  
- 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 creating jobs
  
- Mississippi is a recognized leader in education
  - Teacher pay / 49<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> when fully implemented
  - Princeton Review: 6<sup>th</sup> best testing system in nation
  - Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind” / USA Today article
  - 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in National Board Certified Teachers

- 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
  
- 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

- 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
  
- Take that image home with you
  - Image of good schools, good jobs, good communities