

*Remarks for the  
Rural Economic Impact Grant Presentation (Tylertown)  
May 30, 2003*

- Recognize Mayor Ed Hughes
  - MDA representatives / legislators
  
- It is great to be in Tylertown today
  - Here with some good news
  - A little something to recognize your hard work in growing this community
  
- Your work is part of the reason Mississippi is taking on a different image
  - Image of a state moving faster than anyone else into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  - A state that's competing and leading in the global marketplace

- A state that's setting new standards in education and economic development
  
- 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
  
- Those obstacles make us work even harder to create opportunities
  - 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

## ■ Education is first priority

- Teacher pay / 49<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> when fully implemented
- Princeton Review: 12<sup>th</sup> best testing system in nation
- Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind” / USA Today article
- Computers in Classroom

## ■ Mississippi’s investing in education

- Increasing investment while others are cutting
- That is significant in light of national recession

- When it comes to education, we mean business
  - Business means jobs
  
- 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
  
- This past Tuesday, opened Nissan plant
  - Only U.S. auto plant opening this year / key to Nissan revival
  - 5,300 direct jobs / \$1.4 billion investment
  - 26,000 indirect jobs

- Those are important jobs, but every job created in Mississippi is important
  - Doesn't matter if it's two people in a truck or 5,000 people building a truck
  
- All our work is focused on Mississippi's future and one simple question
  - What do we want?
  - Good schools / good jobs / good communities
  
- That's why I proposed Rural Economic Impact Authority in January / legislature passed
  - \$10 million to aid economic development in rural areas

- Funding to cover workforce training at community colleges
- This program will play a key role in growth of rural Mississippi
  
- It's also why we're here today
  - Awarding first Rural Economic Impact Grant to the City of Tylertown
  - \$250,000 will be used to improve an existing building here
  - Help businesses grow / help create jobs
  
- Mayor Hughes, you know that a check is no good unless it's signed
  - Proud to sign this check for \$245,300 to City of Tylertown
  - Congratulations