

*Remarks for the
Value Line Company
September 9, 2003*

- Recognize Greene County Board of Supervisors, Mayor Fred T. Hight, Jr., Hal Kidd (President of Value Line Furniture Company), Representative Randy Pierce, Senator Tommy Dickerson and Dr. Thames(USM)
- It is great to be with you here today/ this is one of the favorite parts of my jobs
- H.W. Lewis said, “Those who are unwilling to invest in the future haven’t earned one.”
- Mississippi is earning its future, reaping the rewards and is focused on its priorities
 - Priorities- Education and jobs
 - Improving the quality of life for all of its 2.8 million citizens

- As Governor these are the priorities I have focused on
 - Also the priorities that Leakesville and Greene County are focused on
- Value Line Company is a family owned business based in Arkansas and has been operating for 31 years
 - President and CEO Hal Kidd wanted to expand and we stepped up to the plate
 - Mississippi and Greene County were willing to work together with Value Line to make today a reality – That’s what we mean when we say Mississippi is open for business.
- Leakesville Board of Supervisors along with Steve Hale and Joey Roberts at Mississippi

Development Authority and others saw an opportunity and seized it.

- Today, Value Line is announcing 125 jobs by the spring of next year.
- Over 100 jobs in Leakesville is just as important as 5,000 jobs at Nissan in Canton
- Investing for the people of Mississippi today, for dividends tomorrow
- By working together, we have accomplished a lot, but it hasn't been easy
 - Every state impacted by national recession
 - More than \$7 million lost in stock market
 - June 2003 report from Bureau of Labor Statistics: 9.4 million Americans out of work –NAFTA 41,000 to Mexico

- Alabama, Texas and Florida are raising taxes and Arkansas is cutting services. Mississippi has refused to follow.

■ 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
- Computers in the Classroom
- Accountability

- Princeton Review: 12th best testing system in nation
- Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind”
- Our test scores are improving
 - 6th in the nation in National Board Certified Teachers
 - Historic action of funding education first
- **Good schools = good jobs.**
- Mississippi has experienced significant growth over the past three years
- We are aggressive about creating good paying, quality jobs for all Mississippians
 - Over 2,200 new and expanded facilities
 - More than 56,000 new jobs
 - Total investment in Mississippi nearly \$15 billion

- The best thing for a child to see everyday on their way to school is their parents on the way to a good job
- Companies are coming to Mississippi because the word is out about what we can do – Today is a strong testament to are efforts.
- 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 companies looking for a place to do business in the state

- It's an image Leakesville and Greene County leaders are building
- I am proud to say that we are right there with you as you provide leadership
- One thing I learned when I was first elected as a state senator – It does matter who's governor. Mississippians need to have a governor who's accessible to the people
- We will continue to work hard to be your partner, to create opportunities and to listen to your needs
- Throughout my career, I've put the people of Mississippi first and I plan to continue
- Thank you for working with us and for your commitment and dedication to building a better Mississippi

■ Mr. Kidd, the State of Mississippi welcomes you, your family, and the Value Line family to Leakesville.