

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



March 3, 2011



TO THE MISSISSIPPI STATE SENATE:

Governor's veto message for Senate Bill 3042: "AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE AID AND SUPPORT OF THE PUBLIC COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012," and assign the following reasons for my line item veto.

Senate Bill 3042 appropriates \$226.4 million in state support to the state's community and junior colleges for Fiscal Year 2012. This bill is problematic for several reasons.

Any appropriation bill sent to my desk should be developed in the context of a larger budget agreement between the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Governor. At this point in the budgeting process, no agreement on a balanced state budget has been reached, and neither house has a balanced budget.

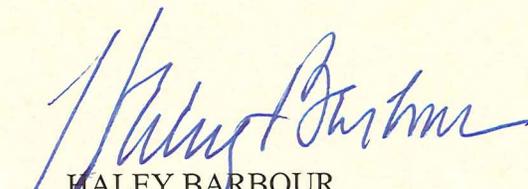
Signing this bill would be a premature action in light of the ongoing negotiations continuing among my office, the House, and the Senate. After all, there is not even agreement on the amount of revenue available for Fiscal Year 2012 – much less an agreement on the amount of funding that state agencies should receive. I believe it would be foolish budgeting policy to sign an appropriations bill tying the hands of budget negotiators during this difficult and important process.

Know this: My veto of SB 3042 is not an indication that I do not support additional monies for our state's community and junior colleges. To the contrary, I have supported throughout my term more money for these important institutions which play a vital role in training Mississippi's workforce. When I was first elected, I supported and the Legislature passed a law to create a Workforce Enhancement Training fund that has provided an additional \$20 million in training funds to our community and junior colleges each year since 2005. In my FY 2012 executive budget recommendation, I urged the Legislature to further increase workforce training funding for community and junior colleges by more than \$7 million. Additionally, I have allocated more than \$23.5 million from the Governor's discretionary fund to help support our community and junior colleges during the current and previous fiscal years. While the Musgrove administration cut funding for community and junior colleges by 16 percent, my administration has prioritized funding for these institutions – resulting in a more than 32 percent funding increase since 2004.

If the Legislature will send me a reasonable, balanced budget that protects an adequate amount of reserves for the state's use in future fiscal years, then I will sign an appropriations bill that funds our community and junior colleges at the level contained in Senate Bill 3042 (\$226.4 million in state support).

However, until we have worked through the budget process, I have no choice but to veto Senate Bill 3042.

Respectfully submitted,


HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR
3/3/11 11:20am