

Governor's article for Municipalities Magazine:

I was glad to have the opportunity to visit with many of you at the Mississippi Municipal League Annual Meeting on the Gulf Coast. It is always exciting to be surrounded by people who love our state.

One of the points I made at the MML opening session was the fact that Mississippi often faces an uphill public relations battle when it comes to the image of our state.

Mississippi is judged, and opinions are formed about our state, by the actions of those of us inside her borders. We have been told for so long that we rank 50<sup>th</sup> that many people have started to believe it.

Mississippi is leading the nation in so many areas, and we need your help to spread the work about our successes. We need to know about your city's successes in areas such as education, economic development, tourism, retirement programs, downtown development, youth programs and senior adult programs.

We have so much to be proud of and we have to let both the people inside and outside of the State of Mississippi know what great opportunities we have to offer. We will be contacting you shortly to ask that you help us compile a list of our "bragging points."

I have said time and time again that I believe our greatest resource is our people. We have an obligation to our people, and that is to make their quality of life better so that they can live, work and raise their families in Mississippi.

That is why developing economic growth, creating economic opportunity and extending economic prosperity to every region of this state, to every community, in every county of this state is so important.

We are developing a plan to do just that. Mississippi's new economic development plan will be comprehensive and will affect long-term sustainable economic growth.

We will not stop until we have economic prosperity in this state from border to border, and we will not stop until every person in this state, and as many people outside the borders of our state know what we are doing right here in Mississippi.

Throughout the month of August, we will travel the state sharing our economic development plan with the people of Mississippi. We look forward to meeting with you and getting your support for our plan that will let people in our state, and our nation, know that Mississippi is America's State of Promise.