

A Proclamation  
By  
Governor Ronnie Musgrove

**WHEREAS**, there are over 31 million Americans who have eyesight loss that keeps them from reading ordinary print; and

**WHEREAS**, the incidence of low vision that leads to blindness now increases yearly, making the need for medical eye research and low vision help acutely needed; and

**WHEREAS**, Retinitis Pigmentosa International was founded by Helen Harris and her family for the purpose of bringing awareness and medical research funds to degenerative blindness and better testing and quality of life programs for children and adults; and

**WHEREAS**, the Harris family has proven in 30 years that one person and one family can make a difference in changing the attitudes of others under apparently impossible odds, that change can happen; and

**WHEREAS**, the organization has brought information and education about medical research and the needs of the blind community to the White House and to the United States Congress for the purpose of curing blindness and providing better quality education and employment opportunities for those suffering from impending blindness; and

**WHEREAS**, under the direction of R.P. International, the first medical book was written for scholars on eye diseases such as retinitis pigmentosa, including night blindness, legal blindness, and information not recognized before; and that programs including public service, the first telethon, newspaper articles, publicity and talk show presentations to draw attention to the overlooked needs of the blind; and

**WHEREAS**, today, the medical research future for degenerative blindness has improved tremendously through these efforts, so that the hope for reversing blindness is now a reality for some of our citizens; and new technology for audio description for motion pictures and television has been brought to the forefront by the founder Helen Harris, allowing blind viewers an equal opportunity to have movies, television and other programs audio described as part of everyday life, in keeping with the need for learning and information when eyesight fails—since seventy percent of learning and information is received through the human eye, the art of Theatre Vision Audio Description will balance this loss to a certain degree; and

**WHEREAS**, this is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of R.P. International, whose persistent, tenacious efforts have brought hope to millions for a cure for blindness, and quality of life enhancement through described programming and other quality of life technologies:

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ronnie Musgrove, Governor of the State of Mississippi, hereby proclaim

**STOP BLINDNESS DAY**

in the State of Mississippi for the nation's blind and vision impaired.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, May 21, 2003, in the two hundred and twenty-sixth year of the United States of America.

RONNIE MUSGROVE  
GOVERNOR