

*Remarks for the  
D'Iberville / St. Martin Chamber of Commerce Membership Banquet  
January 18, 2003*

- Recognize Jerry Dodge / Mayor Rusty Quave
  
- Last week in state of the state, talked about effect of national recession
  - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
  - More than a million American out of work
  - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs

- Effects of national recession hit the just and the unjust
  - Recession has no respect for political parties
  - Every state affected
  
- Have to deal with the impact here in MS
  - Protect people in short term / prepare for long term
  
- Best way to do that is through education
  - Everybody benefits from good schools
  
- Comprehensive plan for education
  - Teacher pay
  - Test scores
  - Computers in Classroom

- Time to go to next level
  - Summer Start program / reduce drop-out rates and increase skills
  - Save the state millions
  
- \$200 million “brain trust”
  - Recruit best minds for research, development, workforce training
  
- Investments in education benefit every Mississippian, not just students
  - People want to live in good communities
  - Good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Have called on Legislature to fund education in one comprehensive bill
  - Fund it at 62 percent of general fund
  - Time to prove to you that when it comes to education, we mean business
  - Business means jobs
  
- Have continued to create quality jobs during national recession
  - Nearly 50,000 new jobs in past three years / \$13.5 billion invested
  
- Building jobs across the spectrum
  - Nissan = \$1.5 billion investment / more than 5,000 direct jobs
  - MS also one of top 10 states for small business survival

- We have the right policies and programs in place to attract business / grow MS
  - Economic development is economic development
  - 2 people in a truck or 5,000 building a truck
  
- Have to create opportunities across the board
  - Rural areas hit hardest by NAFTA
  - Have to be smart and aggressive in creating jobs
  
- That's the driving force behind MS Rural Economic Impact Authority
  - Assistance to new and existing business
  - Training for people who have lost jobs

- D'Iberville would qualify under this plan
  - Opportunity to help D'Iberville and St. Martin area reach its potential
  
- As leaders in this area, encourage you to lead by action, not position
  - Encourage investment in education
  - Encourage investment in economic development
  - Prepare today for benefits tomorrow
  
- Preparation depends on cooperative action between states
  - Work together to benefit people / region

- So much potential for the Gulf Coast
  - Need to invest now to realize full promise and potential
  - Good schools, good jobs, good communities
  
- Those are the results of good leadership
  - Those are the results our people demand and deserve