

*Remarks for the
Job Fair Kickoff
March 18, 2003*

- Recognize Joe Buckner and Frank Riley
who run the Governor's Job Fair Network

- Thank the sponsors, including:
 - Metro Jackson Economic Development Alliance
 - Clarion Ledger
 - MACE
 - Local colleges, universities and community colleges
 - MDA
 - MESC

- The national recession is impacting every state
 - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
 - More than two million Americans out of work
 - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs

- Mississippi is not immune
 - NAFTA has done damage here
 - We're working to change that
 - One job at a time
 - One business at a time

■ One great tool for affecting change is Rural Economic Impact Authority

- \$20M to help with economic development in rural areas
- Funding to cover workforce training at community colleges
- Fighting to bring quality jobs to every Mississippian

■ Mississippi-grown businesses are healthy businesses

- Mississippi in top 10 for small business survival
- We're fighting to keep that ranking

- Economic development is economic development
 - Doesn't matter if it's two people in a truck or 5,000 people building a truck

- We have to look to the future of MS / where do we want to go?
 - Good schools / good jobs / good communities

- Want to thank everyone here today for joining in that fight