

*Remarks for the
Introduction of Senator Blanche Lambert Lincoln
August 24, 2002*

It is great to be here tonight, to share in the good things that are happening in Mississippi.

In the face of a national recession, we're growing Mississippi. We've created nearly 36,000 new jobs in the past two years – and 17,000 of those have come through the expansion of existing businesses.

The world is looking at what we're to build Mississippi, and they're looking at how we're doing it.

The Advantage Mississippi Initiative has been recognized as one of the most aggressive economic development programs in the nation – and it's working here at home.

It's working because we understand that whether it's two men in a truck or 5,000 people building a truck, economic development is important for the people of our great state.

The work we do to create jobs is founded in the work we do to education our people, and that work is going strong. We're raising teacher pay from 49th in the nation to 19th in the nation.

We're putting an Internet-accessible computer in every public school classroom in the state, work that will be completed by the end of the year.

Our test scores are up, in part because the accountability measures we put in place are tougher than anything to come out of Washington.

Quality education means quality jobs. We all win with a well-educated workforce.

Southern states understand better than anyone the challenges of building jobs by first building education.

But, we're overcoming those challenges; we're turning problems into opportunities, and the people are the ones who benefit.

Tonight's keynote speaker knows what I'm talking about. Halfway through her first term as a U.S. Senator from Arkansas, Senator Blanche Lambert Lincoln has demonstrated her commitment to her state and her region.

She has been an outspoken advocate in support of the Delta Regional Authority – an entity that serves 45 counties here in Mississippi alone.

She knows the issues affecting the South – issues like education, agriculture and transportation – and she brings those issues to the forefront of the debates in Washington.

With a seat on the Senate Finance Committee and the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, she is well-positioned to affect positive change for the people of America's South.

Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome our friend and our neighbor, the senator from Arkansas, Blanche Lambert Lincoln.