

*Remarks for the
Lockheed Martin Lease Signing Ceremony
April 26, 2002*

Good afternoon. Today, Mississippi is sending another strong message to the rest of the world, and it's a message that reminds the world we can compete with anyone, anytime, anywhere.

We are here to discuss an important partnership between the State of Mississippi and Lockheed Martin Corporation. I first would like to welcome our Lockheed Martin representatives to today's important lease signing ceremony.

In September of 2000, we announced an exciting new partnership between the Mississippi Development Authority, the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration, the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission, the Hancock County Board of Supervisors, NASA, and Lockheed Martin.

At the heart of this partnership is the establishment of the Propulsion, Thermal and Metrology Center at the John C. Stennis Space Center.

Now, we're bringing this project one step closer to fruition. With the signing of this lease agreement between the State of Mississippi and Lockheed Martin, some 270 Mississippians will have the opportunity to work at this center and to be trained for highly specialized jobs.

Within this new center, the production of propulsion systems used for satellites and other spacecraft will begin. Thermal control systems used to protect space vehicles from extreme temperatures will be developed. And, the science of precise measurements and calibration of test equipment and tools will be performed by Mississippians.

The old saying that 'you can't get to space without going through Mississippi' certainly rings true today as we take one more step toward the development of this world class facility.

When we developed the Advantage Mississippi Initiative, our blueprint for economic development, our goals were to build lasting relationships with companies such as Lockheed Martin.

Through these partnerships and determination, our vision of economic prosperity for our citizens is being realized.

The State of Mississippi is home to world class companies and world class employees. Our labor force is second to none. Our economic development plan is leading the way for major change throughout the state. And, our ability to build important coalitions like the one here today is invaluable to our progress.

On behalf of our citizens, I thank Lockheed Martin for selecting Mississippi as the site for this center of excellence. I would like to introduce Bill Hansen, Vice President of Washington Operations, with Lockheed Martin.