

Bill Signing Ceremony  
Senate Bill 2424  
Medicaid Upper Payment Limits  
Tuesday, February 27, 2001  
3:30 p.m.  
Capital Rotunda – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

**Talking Points**

- Good Afternoon
- Congress' Balanced Budget Act of 1997 contained cuts that hit Mississippi hard and had a negative impact on rural healthcare in our state.
- Over a 5-year period, we lost almost a billion dollars of badly needed funding.
- Quality healthcare services are vital to a better quality of life for all Mississippians.
- The Mississippi Hospital Association (MHA) has identified a federal program that will result in additional revenue for hospitals that provide health care services to our state's less fortunate citizens.
- The Medicare Upper Payment Limits Program dramatically increases the funding necessary to provide hospital care for our state's poor and indigent patients.
- It will help Mississippi hospitals work with the massive budget cuts implemented by Congress.

- The program depends on a hospital fee to operate, so it will have no effect on the state's General Fund.
- The Governor's office has worked closely with the Mississippi Hospital Association, the Division of Medicaid, the House and the Senate to have the opportunity to sign Senate Bill 2424 today.
- The Mississippi Hospital Association and the Division of Medicaid have successfully worked to identify federal programs that will help create a better quality of life for all Mississippians.
- (Introduce Rica Lewis-Payton, Director of the Division of Medicaid)
- We appreciate the efforts of the Mississippi Hospital Association to help us give much needed healthcare options to people across Mississippi.
- (Introduce Doug Higginbotham, Chairman of the Mississippi Hospital Association)
- Senate Bill 2424 provides another opportunity for us to create an even better Mississippi where Mississippians can live, work and raise their families.

- Better healthcare coverage is one of our major concerns; therefore, better healthcare coverage is one of our top priorities.
- Finding innovative ways and being creative to help more Mississippians is our commitment to you.
- I am pleased today to sign Senate Bill 2424.
- (Sign the real bill)
- (Sign the ceremonial bill)
- (After signing the ceremonial bill, shake hands with Doug Higginbotham and hand him the ceremonial bill.)
- We are now available for any questions you may have.