

March 12, 2003

Anne Pope
Federal Co-Chair
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20009-1068

Dear Ms. Pope:

On behalf of the governors of 13 states and Puerto Rico, I would like to invite you to participate in a pivotal conference on leadership and citizen engagement in the South. The conference, scheduled for June 1-3, 2003, in Biloxi, Mississippi, will attract some 400 of the South's top leaders from the worlds of business, academia and public service.

This conference will explore leadership issues that are critical in bringing about positive change in our states and communities. We would like you to participate in a town meeting discussion about leadership as part of a select panel of governors and other key Southern leaders. The town meeting, which I will moderate, is scheduled for the closing session on June 3. The town meeting has become the highlight of the conference for many of our attendees.

The conference is being organized by the Southern Growth Policies Board, for which I serve as chairman. As you know, Southern Growth is a nonprofit, interstate compact composed of governors, legislators and citizen representatives from each of its member jurisdictions. Its mission is to help improve the economy and quality of life in the South through dialog and collaboration among a wide cross-section of the region's policy and program leaders. (For information on current activities, see www.southern.org.)

For additional information on the conference, please contact Jim Clinton, Southern Growth's executive director, at (919) 941-5145 or jclinton@southern.org. I would be grateful if you would be part of this historic and exciting meeting on the future of the South and look forward to your response.

Very truly yours,

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RM:klr