

MS Bar Annual Business Session  
Friday, July 14, 2000  
Sandestin Hilton  
Destin, Florida

You have 10 minutes at the first session to speak and they have asked for 5 minutes for Q & A.

## Opening

1. Good Morning
2. Opening story
3. Mississippi is judged, and opinions are formed about our state because of the action of those of us inside the state
4. Our people are our best ambassadors
5. We must develop those things in our state that make the quality of life for our people better.

## Main Points

1. Economic Development
  - a. Top economic development strategists say when companies are looking for a place to locate or relocate they begin with a long list and start paring down from there
    - i. Right now, Mississippi is not making the long list
    - ii. On paper, we are not competitive

- iii. We want to make not only the short list, but we want to be chosen as the site
- iv. We also cannot ignore the importance of existing industry expansion

b. New economic development plan is being developed

- i. Cities/counties need more flexibility
- ii. Tax incentives
- iii. Makes be competitive
- iv. Input from people across the state
  - 1. Listening tours
  - 2. Mississippi Partnership for Economic Development
    - a. First ever public/private partnership

c. Policy Academy on Entrepreneurship

- i. Only 10 states selected
- ii. Mississippi will create the model to be used nationwide
- iii. Other governors recognize Mississippi as America's State of Promise

2. Highly-trained, technically-skilled and educated workforce is vital to future economic growth

- a. We must invest in our schools

- i. Elementary, Community & Junior College, Colleges & Universities
- b. We must invest in our teachers
  - i. Raising teacher pay to the Southeastern average
    - 1. We will fund it. – A matter of priority
    - 2. Must be a priority in budget.
- c. We must invest in our students
  - i. Keeping good teachers, teaching in the classroom
  - ii. Classroom technology
    - 1. Computer in every classroom by end of 2002 – (DeSoto County Schools- 2<sup>nd</sup> largest county in state – already in process thanks to Bob and Tom Pittman along w/Maddox Foundation and university and state leaders
      - a. Leading the nation
    - 2. Gates Foundation Grant- teaching technology skills to teachers.
      - a. Only 1 of 7 states to receive it.
    - 3. Magnolia
      - a. Opens up access from university and college libraries

to every public library in the state.

d. Better Schools = Better Jobs

## **Closing**

- We have been told we are 50<sup>th</sup> for so long
- We are leading the nation in so many areas
- We have to believe in our state and the advancements we have made
- Promote those advancements