

December 6, 2001

City of Ridgeland
Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 194
Ridgeland, Mississippi 39158

Dear Friends:

As Governor of Mississippi, I am honored to extend a very special welcome to all in attendance at the 2001 Annual Banquet. Please allow me to extend the "South's Warmest Welcome" to each of you, along with your special guest, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Beckwith of New York. Welcome to the beautiful and friendly City of Ridgeland and the great State of Mississippi. We are proud that you have blessed the "The Hospitality State" with your presence and words of encouragement.

As you are gathered tonight to celebrate America and all she stands for, please take a moment to remember the lives that have been lost as well as the treasures that we have in our own lives. God has touched America with countless blessings and although our hearts are broken, our spirits are united, and with God's help, we *will* overcome.

As each of you face the future, I hope you will draw strength from our recent challenges and inspiration from heroes like Mr. Beckwith. We all have a common heritage as Americans. We proudly stand for what we believe and although some of our brothers and sisters have been lost, they will forever remain in the New York skyline and in our hearts.

Best wishes for an incredible event. Please feel free to call on me if I may be of assistance.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM/kfg