

For Immediate Release
July 9, 2002

Contact: John Sewell
601-359-2916

Governor Musgrove Re-negotiates Contracts With Private Prisons

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove announced today the successful re-negotiation of contracts with the operators of private prisons in Mississippi. Management contracts at the five private prison facilities in the state were terminated last week after the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) said funding wasn't available. The negotiations just completed will save the state approximately \$?.

“The needs of this state demand priority budgeting, and that simply wasn't done with the corrections appropriation for this new fiscal year,” Musgrove said. “With these new contracts in place, we can focus on areas such as education and health care while still utilizing the private prisons.”

Musgrove vetoed a portion of the Fiscal Year 2003 appropriations bill for the MDOC that provided \$54.7 million for private prisons, and restricted MDOC Commissioner Robert Johnson's authority to transfer the funds within his budget.

Musgrove has indicated he will call a special session to address the re-appropriation of the funds.

“We are committed to the very best use of our public dollars, and this effort is part of that commitment,” said Musgrove. “This commitment is also shared by the private prison corporations, and I appreciate the cooperative spirit with which they demonstrated in our meetings.”

The five private prison facilities in the state are run by Wackenhut, the Corrections Corporation of America and Tuscolemeta, Inc.

###