

**For Immediate Release**

January 20, 2003

**Contact:** John Sewell

601-359-2916

## **Governor Musgrove Signs Audit Privilege Legislation**

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove today signed Senate Bill 2001, to amend a state law that exempted polluters from criminal prosecution if they reported their own violations. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pulled the state’s Lead-Based Paint Training and Certification Program last month because the Legislature had not changed the law.

Musgrove appealed the EPA action in December.

“I’m pleased the Legislature was able to move quickly and address the important health and safety concerns surrounding this issue,” Musgrove said. “Mississippi has now addressed the concerns of the EPA, and we’re hopeful the delegation of the lead paint program will be returned to the state.”

Charles Chisholm, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, praised the bill signing.

“Thanks to Governor Musgrove’s leadership in working with the EPA and bringing the legislative leadership together on this issue, Mississippi has now addressed the EPA’s concerns on audit privilege,” Chisholm said. “Now we can move forward in working to ensure the health and safety of our people.”

Senate Bill 2001 goes into effect immediately.

###