

South MS Business Journal, 072503

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1. East Mississippi West Alabama Alliance:

Background:

Governor Ronnie Musgrove and Alabama Governor Bob Riley signed a letter of intent on June 12 to establish an interstate agreement focused on job creation along the border between the two states. Musgrove traveled to Montgomery, Alabama, to sign the agreement while the Alabama Legislature is in session.

The letter of intent signed by the two governors establishes the terms by which Mississippi and Alabama will develop the framework for the regional alliance. As the formal agreement is being crafted, the two states pledge “their full and unconditional support to a coordinated, cooperative marketing effort” between the two states, “designed to highlight the many economic advantages to this cooperative economic development strategy.”

Governor Musgrove started working with economic developers and community leaders on this initiative over a year ago. He met with Governor Riley in February at a National Governor’s Conference in Washington DC for the initial discussion between the two states.

Quotes

“Governor Riley and I are committed to crossing state and party lines to create jobs along the border between Mississippi and Alabama,” Musgrove said. “We are dedicated to economic growth, and we are going to change the way business is done in the south and in America.”

“The bottom line is to create economic opportunity and improve quality of life for the people of Mississippi and Alabama,” Musgrove said.

2. Rural Economic Impact Authority

Background:

During the State of the State on January 9, 2003, Governor Musgrove asked for the passage of the Rural Economic Impact Authority. The legislation was passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor. The Mississippi Rural Impact Fund is supported by the issuance of up to \$10 million in general obligation bonds. Funds are used to provide grants or loans to rural communities in support of economic development efforts, and to guarantee loans on behalf of

rural businesses. The Mississippi Development Authority, under the Office of Governor Ronnie Musgrove, administers the program.

Under Musgrove's leadership and during a national recession, more than 2,200 facilities have opened or expanded, creating over 53,000 jobs. Capital investment in the state for those facilities during the same period totals nearly \$15 billion. The state was listed by *Site Selection* magazine last year as one of the top ten states for new and expanded facilities. In September 2001, the state was named one of the top ten states for small business survival. The January 2003 issue of *Expansion Management* magazine ranked four Mississippi cities among the 50 hottest cities for expansion in the nation.

Quote:

"I proposed the creation of the Authority in January and today \$10 million is available to assist with job creation in rural areas and worker training at our community colleges around the state. I will continue to fight for jobs in every part of Mississippi," said Musgrove.