Remarks for the
Public Education Forum Task Force on Teacher Quality
February 18, 2003

- Recognize Den Knecht, Peggy Howard, Dr. Phyfa Eiland, Dr. Henry Johnson, Cecil Brown

- It’s a good time for education in Mississippi
  - Two weeks ago, signed historic education funding bill
  - Others cutting education, we put children first
  - Historic action, historic time
Investing in education at 62 percent of budget
  o Investment in our people, our potential, our future

Recommendations in this report are far-reaching and exciting
  o Focus on taking teaching to the next level
  o That’s good for Mississippi

Report addresses wide array of topics, including
  o Compensation / recruitment and retention / professional development
Pleased to see focus on relationship between education and economic development

- Report specifically calls for development of “a partnership among economic and educational agencies and organizations to promote Mississippi as a desirable place to live, learn and work”
- That’s how we build good schools, good jobs, good communities

We’ve had many successes, but there is still more work to be done

- We’ve taken obstacles and turned them into opportunities, but we can’t rest on our accomplishments
Proud of the broad range of expertise that contributed to this report

- Individuals from education / business / government
- All brought specific talents and insights
- Thank the members of the Task Force for their service

Together, we are setting a standard for other states to follow