

Campaign Kickoff Speech

Intro

- It's so good to be back at the Neshoba County fair
- I want to thank all of you for coming out today to celebrate our great democracy
 - and listen to some good ol' down home stump speeches
- Whenever you come to East Mississippi you can't help but remember one her great sons.
 - Senator John C. Stennis
- Senator Stennis and I have a few things in common.
 - We both spent our lives working for the people of Mississippi
 - We both always put Mississippi first
 - And Haley Barbour ran against both of us.
- In 1982 Senator Stennis defeated Haley Barbour
 - And sent him packing to Washington DC
- Come November, with your help and a lot of hard work,
- I'm confident that I can once again follow in footsteps Senator Stennis.

- This election is not about how many television advertisements you can afford, or how many national politicians in Washington DC you're friends with, or how much money you can raise.
- This election is about setting priorities; it is about leadership, and it is about "Putting Mississippi First."
- Like many of you here today, I've lived in Mississippi all my life.
 - I was born here.
 - I was raised here.
 - I went to school here.
- And again like so many of you,
- I've worked here my whole life

- Like most of our fellow Mississippians, I lived and worked in a small town, - Batesville –
 - a friendly community
 - where people work hard
 - care about their neighbors,
 - where an abiding faith in God
 - and a deep love of Country still matter.
- Like the rest of Mississippi, Batesville is a supportive community
 - We take care of each other
 - Help each other up when we fall
 - And pat each other on the back when we do good
- These ideas and ideals are part of the core set of values that Mississippian's hold dear

- We should expect our leaders to want the best and do their best for all Mississippians

As Governor

- Four years ago, I stood before the people of Mississippi and asked to be their Governor. I ran on a platform of
 - improving test scores
 - education accountability
 - job creation through economic development
 - and conservative fiscal principles.
- During a national recession
 - When national unemployment is at nine year high
- And states across the nation are raising taxes and cutting services
 - Arkansas: \$106 million tax increase.
 - Alabama: considering a \$1.2 Billion tax increase.
 - Texas: cutting healthcare for hundreds of thousands of children
 - And used \$1 billion from their rainy day fund.
- But here in Mississippi, we have refused to follow suit
- As Governor,
- I have not raised taxes.
- We've set priorities,
- balanced the state budget,
- and we have not depleted our rainy day fund.

Education

- I promised to improve our schools
- And working together we have
- and you can see the results of our achievement and investment across Mississippi.
 - Computers in the Classroom
- We have given our children the opportunity
- To not only learn about
 - But participate in the world community
- Mississippi is the state in the nation to put a computer in every classroom.

Teachers

- Working with the legislature we passed the largest teacher pay raise in the history of Mississippi
- Finally we're paying our teachers like the professionals they are
- Accountability / Testing
- I've always believed that which gets measured gets done.
- That's why we've made education accountability a top priority,
 - and it has paid off.

- Before I became Governor,
- 122 schools were identified as needing improvement
- By 2002, there were only 11 such schools
 - A 90% improvement.
- Mississippi has the 12th best education accountability program in the nation
- And we're seeing the results in our children's test scores
- This year for the second year in a row Mississippi Curriculum Test scores increased
 - at every grade level
- Among the rest of the nation, our students are not only improving,
- they're showing some of the strongest improvements in America
- Mississippi was the 6th state in the nation to be approved for President Bush's No Child Left Behind
 - And the first state in the South approved
- Because of these accomplishments,
- We received a 6 year, \$72 million federal "Reading First" grant
- And don't be fooled, we're keeping our kids safe from drugs
- We've got some of the best Drug Enforcement officers in the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics
- Last year I appointed Frank Melton as director of the MBN
 - And I have to say he's doing a bang up job
- This week he oversaw the largest drug bust in Mississippi's history
- Mississippi's law enforcement officers are putting drug dealers who would harm our children behind bars.

Jobs

- The best deterrents to crime in Mississippi are strong laws, good schools and economic opportunity
- Good schools bring good jobs and build great communities
- (Applause Line) I believe Mississippi's workers are the best!
 - hardest working,
 - and most productive workers in America.
- We've changed the way Mississippi does business.
 - during a national recession
 - when no other automobile plants were opening in the country
 - When others were working to send manufacturing jobs to Mexico
- We were able to bring Nissan to Mississippi.
- As a result, Nissan is making a \$1.4 billion investment in Mississippi,
 - Hiring over 5,000 people in the next two years,
 - 30,000 direct and indirect jobs.
- They have already hired people from 77 of our 82 counties

Northrop Grumman / Howard Industries

- The achievement at Canton isn't unique.
- We've created thousands of jobs with expansions at
 - Northrop Grumman and the Laurel based Howard Industries ..
- A \$424 million investment in Mississippi

MS / AL Partnership

- We've reached across party and state lines,
- breaking down old barriers to provide new opportunity.
- Like the Mississippi/Alabama partnership
- To focus on economic development along the border we share.
- Over the last three and a half years,
- We've created over 53,000 good jobs,
- At 2,200 new and expanded facilities
- And brought over \$15 billion in new investment to Mississippi.
- (Applause Line) As your Governor, I will continue to buck the national trends and create new jobs right here in Mississippi – because we are putting Mississippi first.

Haley NAFTA

- One of my opponents, Haley Barbour,
- has been a big time lobbyist in Washington, D.C., for the last twenty years,
- and now he's come down here to run for Governor by running down Mississippi.
 - I guess absence makes the heart grow fonder
- Because yesterday after 20 years of working against us
 - Haley Barbour said Mississippi is worth fighting for
- But while we've been fighting to keep jobs in Mississippi and create new ones
 - Haley was fighting against us
- to pass NAFTA
- But Haley wasn't around to see the devastation that NAFTA brought to Mississippi
 - The lost jobs
 - The empty factories
- NAFTA sent hundreds of thousands of American manufacturing jobs to Mexico and Canada
 - NAFTA took 41,000 Mississippi jobs to other countries
- And Haley Barbour made over \$400,000 when he was brought in as a hired gun for Mexico
 - To protect Mexican jobs
- But my priority is putting Mississippi first
- And Mississippi can do better than a candidate who puts Mexico before Mississippi

Repeal the Death Tax

- In my second term my priority as governor will remain issues that affect all Mississippian's
 - Good Schools

- High paying quality jobs
 - And building better communities Because at the end of the day
- When Mississippi's families sit down for dinner
- These are the issues that really matter
- Many Mississippian's are achieving their dreams by working hard to build and maintain family businesses and farms
- Family owned small businesses are one of the top employers in our state
- And we must protect the tradition of keeping family businesses in the family
 - Mississippi has been ranked as one of the top ten states in the nation for small business survival
- But the death tax puts an undue and unfair burden on Mississippi's family owned businesses
- As Lieutenant Governor I worked with the legislature to reduce the death tax
- It's time to finish the job That is why in my second term
- I will repeal the death tax
 - We must allow Family businesses to be passed down to future generations
 - and allow those generations the opportunity
 - to continue to build on the traditions that were set before them by their parents
- To the children of Mississippi, I say
 - Your future can be right here at home in Mississippi and that future is looking brighter every day.
- I say that Mississippi is the greatest state in the nation
 - to live
 - to work
 - and to raise a family.
- (Applause Line) I say, we've done great things together
 - and I say we're going to do more in the next four years.
- We're going to continue to create good paying jobs,
 - improve our schools
 - build stronger, safer, healthier communities
 - because Mississippi is on the road to success.
- I am asking all of the people of Mississippi to join me in this campaign to continue to put Mississippi First.
- I want to thank all of you here today for your support.
- May God Bless Mississippi
- and the United States of America.

