

April 23, 1999

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

GOVERNOR'S VETO MESSAGE FOR HOUSE BILL 1528

I am returning House Bill 1528, "AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 69-2-13, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCREASE FROM \$16,000,000.00 TO \$24,000,000.00, THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE EMERGING CROPS FUND BY THE MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS FINANCE CORPORATION TO ASSIST IN PROVIDING FINANCING FOR MINORITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; TO EXTEND THE REPEAL DATE ON THE MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS FINANCE CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE SUCH ASSISTANCE; TO INCLUDE CONTRACTS WITH FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES IN THE TYPES OF CONTRACTS FOR WHICH THE MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS FINANCE CORPORATION WILL GUARANTEE BID, PERFORMANCE AND PAYMENT BONDS WHICH MINORITY BUSINESSES ARE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN FOR SUCH CONTRACTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS FINANCE CORPORATION SHALL MAKE LOANS FROM THE EMERGING CROPS FUND TO PRODUCERS OF SWEET POTATOES AND COOPERATIVES OWNED BY SWEET POTATO PRODUCERS TO ASSIST IN THE PLANTING OF SWEET POTATOES AND THE PURCHASE OF SWEET POTATO PRODUCTION AND HARVESTING EQUIPMENT; TO AMEND SECTION 69-2-19, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO INCREASE FROM \$95,000,000.00 TO \$103,000,000.00, THE AMOUNT OF BONDS THAT MAY BE ISSUED TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR THE EMERGING CROPS FUND; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES," without my approval and respectfully present the following reasons for my veto:

This bill would add \$8,000,000 to an existing government program that passes out loans based on the borrower's sex or skin color. I have often stated that these gender and racial preferences are constitutionally and morally wrong.

This legislation also expands the minority business program by extending state taxpayer guarantees to bonds posted by contractors for work on "federal agencies or departments." This protection was previously afforded to work only on Mississippi projects. The federal government already goes to great lengths to encourage minority participation in contracts (judging by a recent major Supreme Court ruling, Adarand Constructors v. Peña, too far). I see no need for state taxpayers to subsidize federal work in this manner.

We should be repealing preferences based on a person's race or sex, not expanding them. For that reason I must veto this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

KIRK FORDICE
GOVERNOR