



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

**ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER**

# **PRESS STATEMENT**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 29, 2025**

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## **Ag Commissioner Gipson Commemorates 20th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina**

**JACKSON, Miss.** – Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson gave the following statement as officials around the state commemorate the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, which struck Mississippi with its full force on this day, August 29, in 2005.

“As we reflect today on 20 years since Hurricane Katrina struck our beloved Mississippi Gulf Coast, we remember and mourn the 238 Mississippians who lost their lives as a result of the worst natural disaster in American history.

I was honored today to attend the memorial service at Jones Park in Gulfport, where I was able to personally thank former Governor Haley Barbour and First Lady Marsha Barbour for their leadership during those difficult days. The Mississippi Gulf Coast was ground zero for Hurricane Katrina and the devastation will be forever etched in our minds, as well as the resulting and inspiring resilience of our People who prayed, got up the next day, went to work and set about rebuilding our lives.

Two decades ago, my wife Leslie and I were young parents with a 1-year-old son and one more on the way who was due August 29th. (He decided to wait until after Katrina to be born.) The morning after the storm, like all our neighbors, we went outside to gather debris, repair fences and round up cows who had gotten out. Katrina dealt a terrible blow to all our farmers, ranchers, timber owners and landowners, as well as the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Today, we remember and honor those who lost their lives, but we also recognize the Mississippi National Guard, law enforcement officers, first responders and army of volunteers who poured into our state to help Mississippians begin again. By God’s grace —and with the help of our neighbors — we stand together today in unity, grateful for the renewal and rebuilding that has taken place along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and throughout our state in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

May God continue to bless the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the State of Mississippi and our beloved United States of America.”

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