



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

ANDY GIPSON  
COMMISSIONER

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Ag Commissioner Gipson Outlines Vision for Mississippi's Future at Neshoba County Fair**

**PHILADELPHIA, Miss.** – During his annual remarks at the Neshoba County Fair, Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson delivered a patriotic address highlighting the serious threats facing Mississippians today, while outlining solutions to address those affecting the state's rural communities.

“God has blessed America, He’s blessed Mississippi and He’s blessed me. I’ve lived the American dream, and I’m proof that any child can live the American dream right here in Mississippi,” said Commissioner Gipson. “As we celebrate America’s 250th anniversary, we need to get back to the unchanging roots of our American freedom.”

Gipson identified the following as his “Freedom Principles” for Mississippians and Americans alike:

1. Our founders gave us the unparalleled founding documents, a Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, outlining the truth that our freedom comes from God, not the government. Government simply exists to safeguard our rights, and when it fails to do that, it’s time to start over.
2. Our farmers have always produced the American food and fiber we must have to sustain our Freedom. We need to stop depending on foreign sources of food and start rebuilding our local food supply to guarantee our ongoing independence.
3. Our fighters – our veterans – have successfully secured and defended our freedom since the birth of America. We owe our veterans, law enforcement and first responders our unwavering support.
4. Our faith is another defining principle. The founders of America in the Declaration of Independence acknowledged the Creator who has endowed us with unalienable rights. The declaration of America’s independence was made with a firm reliance on Divine Providence. And if we are to remain free, we must return to God in this country. Our freedom is ultimately grounded in our faith in God and in God’s Word, the Bible.

“These principles will guarantee our freedom here in Mississippi and America for the next 250 years,” continued Gipson.

Gipson went on to highlight what he described as two serious threats that must be addressed head-on: America's over-dependence on foreign food and the public safety crisis of juvenile crime in Mississippi.

As a solution, Commissioner Gipson emphasized the importance of investing in local food processing and warehousing, cold storage, wholesale distribution and retail to rebuild and strengthen our local food supply infrastructure. He spoke about a fundamental responsibility to feed Mississippi and America first through the establishment of three regional, local food hubs, which will guarantee fresh and healthy foods for Mississippi's future.

In addition, Gipson stated plainly that Mississippi must build a state juvenile facility to house and rehabilitate dangerous youth. "Our people are living in fear with the rampant juvenile crime plaguing our land. We must declare war now on the rise of violent crime committed by youth in Mississippi," said Gipson. "These dangerous youth need to be identified, held accountable, removed from our schools and communities, and incarcerated and educated in a proper, juvenile facility. They must earn their way out by attaining an educational diploma or a skill to guarantee they get a job and become productive citizens."

"It is our responsibility to make sure Mississippi families have access to good, healthy, local, nutritious and affordable food while ensuring our communities remain safe for future generations," concluded Gipson. "By holding fast to our principles, investing in our local food supply and addressing violent juvenile crime, we can build a stronger, safer Mississippi for our children and grandchildren."

Commissioner Gipson is returning to the Neshoba County Fair today, Friday, June 26, to present the annual Commissioner's Cup Award for the fastest mile in harness horse races, a tradition begun by former Agriculture Commissioner Jim Buck Ross.

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**Photo attached.**



**Ag Commissioner Andy Gipson holds up his Bible while outlining his principles of American Freedom for the past 250 years and the next 250 years at the Neshoba County Fair.**