



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
MISSISSIPPI FAIR COMMISSION**

COMMISSIONER CINDY HYDE-SMITH
CHAIRMAN

PRESS RELEASE

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Mississippi Fair Commission Breaks Ground on the New Mississippi Trade Mart

The Mississippi Fair Commission broke ground on the new Mississippi Trade Mart with a ceremony on Thursday. Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith presided over the ceremony and gave a keynote address, explaining the economic impact a new Trade Mart will have on the City of Jackson and the state, as well as thanking those who helped her move the project forward. Governor Phil Bryant and Speaker of the House of Representatives Philip Gunn provided remarks during the ceremony and assisted members of the Mississippi Fair Commission and Hyde-Smith in breaking ground on the construction site.

“The Mississippi State Fairgrounds attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year from all across Mississippi and throughout the country and serves as one of the largest economic drivers in the City of Jackson,” Hyde-Smith said. “When people come here for events, many spend money staying overnight in local hotels, dining at restaurants in the area, and shopping in retail stores, which is generating additional revenue for local businesses.”

The Trade Mart is the hub for much of the activity that takes place on the Fairgrounds and is booked for events 48 of the 52 weekends a year. Around 200,000 visitors walk through its doors each year attending one of nearly 80 events that are hosted there.

“One of my top priorities since becoming Commissioner has been to improve the over 100-acre State Fairgrounds complex and its facilities,” Hyde-Smith said. “I am grateful to the Mississippi Legislature for authorizing \$30 million to build a new Trade Mart and to make improvements to the Mississippi Fairgrounds.”

This investment in a new Trade Mart will provide a facility that offers services, conveniences and amenities that will attract new businesses and groups to the Mississippi Fairgrounds. The new Trade Mart will be attached to the Mississippi Coliseum, which will make the facility more marketable for hosting a wide array of events. The existing Trade Mart, built in 1975, has exceeded its useful life and is not economically feasible to renovate.

“Much time and research went into the planning and design of the new 109,000 square foot facility,” Hyde-Smith said. “Valuable input was gathered from our customers to ensure that the new facility will meet their needs and expectations in the future. The enhanced features of the new facility like the café and commercial kitchen will better accommodate our customers and our visitors.”

The new Trade Mart was designed by Wier Boerner Allin Architecture, and Fountain Construction is the general contractor. Construction is expected to take approximately 18 months. The current Trade Mart will continue to operate until construction on the new Trade Mart is complete.

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Photo attached.



Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith (sixth from the left) and the Mississippi Fair Commission broke ground on the new Mississippi Trade Mart Thursday. Assisting with the groundbreaking were Jean Massey (left), Vocational Education Director for the Mississippi Department of Education; Paul Smith; Mayor for the City of Jackson Chokwe Antar Lumumba; Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann; Governor Phil Bryant; Speaker of the House of Representatives Philip Gunn; State Auditor Stacey Pickering; Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney; Glenn McCullough, Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority; and Dr. Gary Jackson, Director of the Mississippi State University Extension Service.