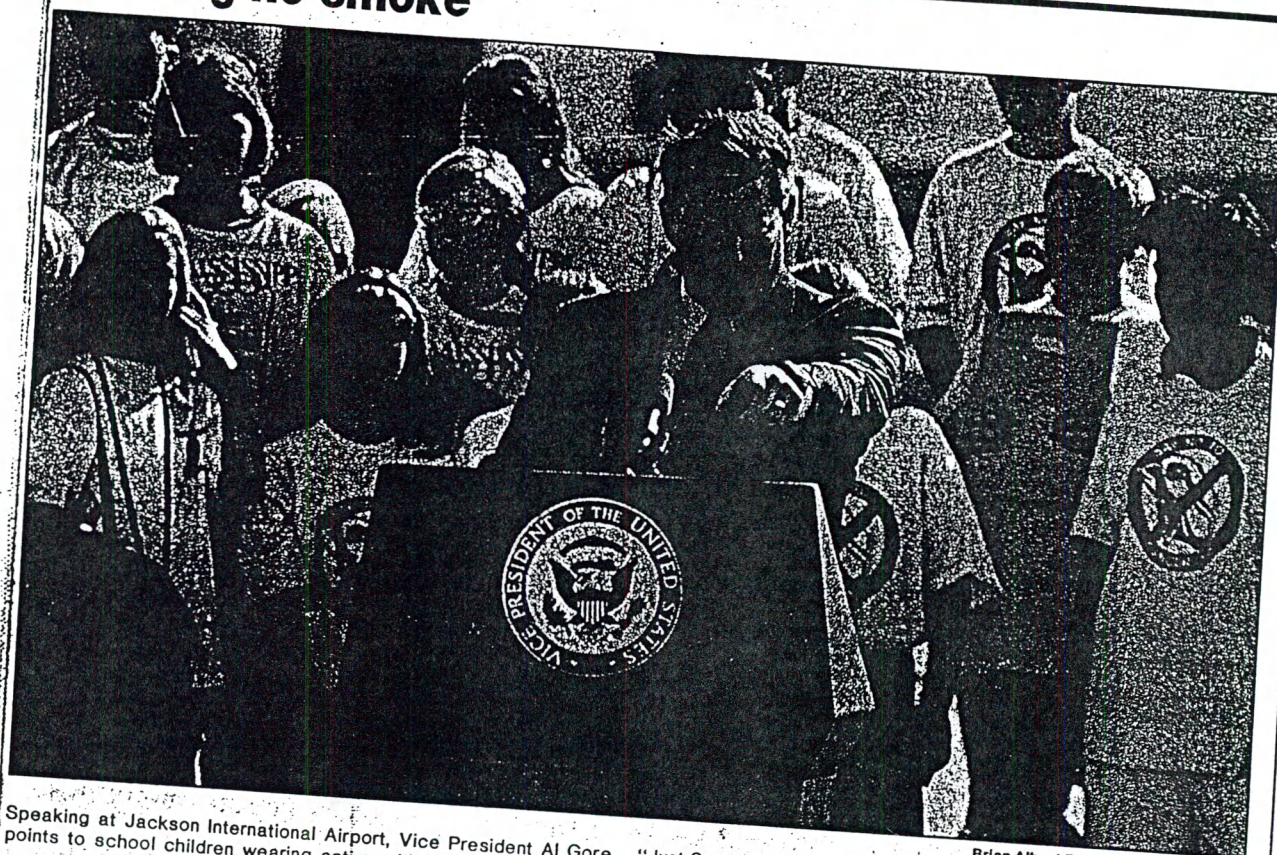


June 4, 96

Front Page

Jen O'Connell  
Kinney

## Blowing no smoke



Speaking at Jackson International Airport, Vice President Al Gore points to school children wearing anti-smoking T-shirts that read,

"Just Say No To Cancer Joe," and commends them for their commitment to abstinence from smoking.

Brian Albert Broom/The Clarion-Ledger

## Vice president speaks out against smoking

■ Al Gore tells Jackson audience of his sister's death from lung cancer.

By Mac Gordon  
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

Vice President Al Gore on Monday told of personal family tragedy in warning Mississippi youth about the dangers of smoking.

His main thesis during a 15-minute talk under a broiling sun at Jackson International Airport: "Smoking is bad for you."

Gore should know: His sister, Nancy Gore Hunger, who lived most of her adult life in Greenville,

died in 1984 from lung cancer.

"I loved her more than life itself," Gore said of his sibling, who was married to Greenville lawyer Frank Hunger, now a Clinton administration official in Washington.

Gore's story about his sister — he recalled holding her hand at her final breath — was especially poignant because more than half of the estimated crowd of 300 people were youngsters in anti-tobacco clubs like "Tar Wars" and "Smoke-Free Class of 2000." And his sister, he said, was 13 when she started smoking, the age of many in attendance.

Eleven-year-old Jessica Prude,

a fifth-grader at Oak Grove Elementary, said she could relate to Gore's story about his sister. "A lot of people in my family have died from smoking-related lung cancer. I want to tell everyone not to smoke, because I don't want that to happen to them," Prude said.

Gore, introduced by Mississippi Attorney General Mike Moore, used the Jackson stop to promote President Clinton's anti-smoking campaign as well as the duo's reelection bid this year. He told the youth from across the state that smoking kills 400,000 Americans every year and "they get hooked when they are your age."

"The tobacco companies spend billions and billions ... to put advertisements out specifically targeted at young people," he said.

Said Paula Ivey of Starkville, state president of Parents and Teacher Association: "We have got to work with the convenience stores who put up the advertisements and make them obey the law if we want to make a difference." Mississippi has a law limiting youths' access to tobacco products, but critics say it goes largely unenforced.

■ Staff writer Melanie Simpson contributed to this story.

■ Gore links GOP, tobacco, 1B

# Gore calls tobacco industry GOP pawn



"The Republican Party does whatever the tobacco companies tell them to do."

— Vice President  
Al Gore

■ The vice president comes to Jackson to speak out against smoking.

By Mac Gordon  
Clarion-Ledger Staff Writer

Mississippi Attorney General Mike Moore's tobacco lawsuit will be successful and Gov. Kirk Fordice "is wrong" to try to stop it, Vice President Al Gore said Monday.

Gore, during a combination anti-tobacco and political campaign stop in Jackson, also assailed the tobacco industry as pawns of the Republican Party.

"The tobacco industry has become by far the leading source of money for the Republican National Committee. The Republican Party has made the conscious decision to accept so much money from the tobacco companies — and so much more from them than any other source — it has become almost a wholly owned subsidiary of the tobacco industry," Gore said at the Jackson International Airport.

The vice president from neighboring Tennessee, who came here to promote President Clinton's anti-smoking campaign and their 1996 re-election quest,

attended a Democratic Party fund-raiser at the Flora home of Jackson lawyer David Nutt after the airport appearance. The fund-raiser was \$25,000 per couple.

About 300 people, including teenagers involved in the fight against tobacco and a bevy of current and former public officials in the state, came to the airport to get a rare personal glimpse of the nation's second-ranking leader.

But thousands more were affected by Gore's visit: Security personnel stopped after-5 p.m. rush-hour traffic along I-55 north and on Lakeland Drive as the Gore entourage made its way to Nutt's home. Police even stopped traffic on interstate ramps to help ensure Gore's safety.

Republicans, however, were not safe from the tongue-lashing that Gore delivered after his official talk.

"The Republican Party does whatever the tobacco companies tell them to do. If the tobacco companies say jump, they say, 'How high?' I think it is morally and ethically wrong, because it results in kids like these becoming addicted and being killed by tobacco," Gore said.

See SMOKE, 2B

■ Vice President assails smoking, 1A

a nurse's assistant

BRANDON — Winnie Marie Ball, 72, a nurse's assistant, died of cancer at St. Dominic's hospital.

Saturday at her home.

## Smoke

From 1B

"The evidence is indisputable. Yet, they (Republicans) continue taking the money," Gore said.

Fordice is away on a trade mission. Philip Gaines, who represents Fordice in his petition challenging Moore's authority to pursue his tobacco lawsuit, said, "The governor's case against Mike Moore has to do with constitutional issues and separation of powers and allocation of executive authority and doesn't have anything to do with teen smoking. The tobacco litigation of Mike Moore is coincidental to that suit."

Moore, who shared center stage with Gore, said the federal government has been supportive of his case seeking to recover tax dollars spent on tobacco-related illnesses.

It's state government's administrator, Fordice, who's giving Moore fits: Fordice has asked the state Supreme Court to order Moore to drop the lawsuit because Fordice's approval wasn't sought before it was filed.

"No one understands where the governor is coming from — why he is the only governor in America trying to stop the tobacco litigation," Moore said. "It's always the first question people outside the state asked me: 'Why is your governor suing you?' I really don't have a good answer."

"The governor is not going to win. I think our Supreme Court will take a vote for kids over big tobacco," Moore said.

State Democratic Chairman Johnnie Walls of Greenville said Fordice's railing against the tobacco lawsuit is helping the litigation. "I think it shows the attorney general is on the right track," Walls said.

Second District U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson greeted Gore at the airport and said it is fitting he chose Mississippi to make his speech.

"Clearly at this point, tobacco is a major initiative," Thompson said. "And the fact that Mississippi led the way in litigation against tobacco companies is significant, now that it has caught on around the nation."

Pam Dotson of the American

Cancer Society's Jackson office said "it never hurts" to have someone of Gore's stature available to discuss anti-tobacco activity.

Dotson said Moore was to be commended for his tobacco lawsuit and wished state government would give him more help.

"We want our governor to get on that bandwagon," Dotson said of Fordice.

"Attorney generals across the country are supporting the lawsuit's activities, but we also want more enforcement laws," Dotson said. "We have a youth access (to tobacco) law in Mississippi, and we are looking at more ways to enforce it."

About 50 members of the "Smoke-Free Class of 2000," rising ninth-graders who will graduate from high school in the spring of 2000, were on hand to greet Gore. The organization — which has about 35,000 members from across the state — is sponsored by cancer, heart and lung advocacy groups in Mississippi.

Tom Hall of Oxford, a veteran Republican leader in north Mississippi, said Gore's visit was important because — party politics aside — he is, after all, the vice president.

"Anytime we can get the president or vice president to come here, we have the opportunity to sell them on how good a state Mississippi is," Hall said.

Despite his GOP loyalties, Hall also tried to look positively at the rumor about Moore's chances of joining a second Clinton administration — if there is one.

"It would be a plus for the state to have a Mississippian in a position like that — just like when Mike Espy was secretary of agriculture," Hall said. "There are a lot of Republicans who would like to see Mike Moore go to the moon — anything to kick him out of what he's doing now."

Staff writers Beverly Pettigrew Kraft and Melanie Simpson contributed to this report.

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Talking Points  
Vice President Al Gore

Anti Smoking Event  
Jackson, MS  
June 3, 1996

Tobacco  
Gore  
tax  
MS  
6/3/96

(ACKNOWLEDGMENTS FROM ADVANCE)

- ◆ I would like to start today by thanking these young people behind me -- the Tar Wars group . . . The Smoke-free Class of 2000 . . . and the 5th grade classes from Oak Grove Elementary School in Hattiesburg, Cedars Elementary in Vicksburg, and the CREATE class from Biloxi (Bill-UHX-ee).
- ◆ I want to thank them because they are the reason we are here.
- ◆ President Clinton and I have a vision for these young people, and young people across the country. We want them to grow up in an America that is stronger and in an America that offers more opportunity than any other time in our history.
- ◆ An America that is stronger means providing opportunity -- an economy that is growing . . . an environment that is cleaner and healthier . . . schools that are filled with computers and the latest technologies . . . and streets that are safe.
- ◆ But most of all . . . an America that is stronger . . . means Americans who are stronger. For us to lead the world, we need to be healthy enough to make the most of our own lives. And that's what the anti-smoking campaign is all about.
- ◆ The President and I know first-hand of the dangers of smoking. My sister died of lung cancer a fairly young age. And the President also lost his mother to smoking.
- ◆ But tragically, there are millions of other families who have also lost loved ones or had to deal with the devastating effects of smoking.
- ◆ Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States -- tobacco products are responsible for more than 400,000 deaths each year. In fact, cigarettes kill more Americans each year than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, illegal drugs and fires . . . combined.
- ◆ That is why it is so disheartening to see smoking among young people going up. Each and every day, 3,000 young people become regular smokers. Nearly 1,000 of them will eventually die as a result of their smoking . . . their lives will be cut short on average by 12 to 15 years.

- ◆ But if the young people behind me teach us anything, it is this: we have to turn this around. And we're going to turn this around.
- ◆ We're going to turn this around because we have parents, teachers, religious leaders, private citizens and public officials, like Attorney General Mike Moore, who are concerned and ready to act.
- ◆ We're going to turn this around because we have a President like Bill Clinton. He is putting into effect a policy that will help keep tobacco out of young people's hands. Through the Children's Tobacco Initiative and the Synar Regulation, which demands that states do their part, we are going to reduce smoking by children by 50 percent within seven years.

You know, people have told President Clinton that his anti-smoking stance is bad politically. "Don't do it," they say. "Politically, it's wrong."

But the President is determined to do what is right. And we should all be proud that we have a leader in this country who is guided by such principles.

- ◆ Most of all, we're going to turn this around because we have young people who are not giving into peer pressure . . . young people who are taking responsibility. The people behind me know that sometimes it is not enough taking a leadership role to make sure that other kids don't fall into the smoking trap. And let me say to all of you, I admire the stand you're taking and the lessons you're teaching.

Keep up the good work.