

Jace Ponder, Moderator



Jace R. Ponder serves as the Director of the Mississippi Governor's Office of Military Affairs (GOMA), a role in which he spearheads initiatives to attract new defense missions to the state and reinforce existing ones. He collaborates with key organizations, including the Defense Community Development Council (DCDC), the Installation Commanders Council, the Mississippi National Guard, and the Mississippi Congressional Delegation, to bolster the state's defense economy.

Ponder also plays a crucial part in coordinating support for defense installations across the state with the DCDC. The DCDC, established in 2022 by Gov. Tate Reeves, advocates for military installations at both state and federal levels, focusing on policy areas such as education and spousal licensing. Prior to his role at GOMA, Ponder was the communications director for the Hancock County Port & Harbor Commission, a leading economic development organization. His career also includes experience as a statewide public information officer for the Mississippi Department of Transportation and as the former owner of The Gazebo Gazette, a community newspaper on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Ponder holds a master's degree in journalism from the University of Mississippi and is based in Jackson, Mississippi.