

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records
Subgroup/Office of Origin: Domestic Policy Council
Series/Staff Member: Christina Ho
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 21538
FolderID:

Folder Title:
Disability--Digital Divide Disability Tour

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
S	96	5	1	2

Last Updated: September 4

Summary of Potential Deliverables

High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy: Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. High-tech CEOs would commit to implement "best practices" such as: Training their workers to develop accessible products and services; Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services; Identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and, Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

- STATUS: Several CEOs have already "signed" on to the letter; working with associations and individual companies to secure additional commitments.

University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:

Presidents of the leading research universities would commit to: Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility; Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and, Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Several Presidents have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments.

Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities: Employers would agree to: Targeting disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals; Making assistive technology available to their employees; and, Promoting the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.

- STATUS: Several have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments.

Commission on Assistive Technology: We would announce that foundations are supporting a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disability community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas, such as financing assistive technology for people who may not be able to afford it and working with colleges and universities to improve education and outreach about accessible technology.

- STATUS: Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI) will likely be the "home" of this commission. Norm Coombs and Larry Scadden are working to develop the focus of the commission. We are working to identify possible members. Several foundations have indicated an interest in financially supporting the commission.

Making educational content accessible: The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready

Making the Web accessible: The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready?

Education and outreach about benefits of accessible design. NCR is partnering with IDEAL at NCR and EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information) to create a workshop, "The Global Business Benefits of Designing Accessible and Usable Electronic and Information Technology," offered on-line to 400 participants free of charge (i.e. educators and industry experts).

- STATUS: Ready

Support of computer labs in minority schools of Atlanta. NCR, in partnership with the Alliance of Black NCR Employees, will provide roughly 100 PCs to continue its efforts to setup computer labs in the Atlanta City School district.

- STATUS: Ready, but as proposed doesn't have a direct connection to people with disabilities (part of an existing initiative), but there may be a way the proposal could be designed to help meet the needs of minority students with disabilities.

Supporting New Jersey Entrepreneurs with disabilities. Microsoft, Community Options, the New Jersey Community Loan Fund, the New Jersey Technology Council, the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners and other public and private sector partners in New Jersey, are preparing to announce the establishment of the first-in-the-nation business incubator targeted to low income individuals including, as a priority, those with disabilities. It will provide low-cost office space, customized technology support, business planning expertise, and other support services to entrepreneurs with and without disabilities.

- STATUS: The 14,000 square-foot facility has not yet opened, but could be ready within a few weeks. Waiting on additional information from Community Options

Financial Lending Opportunities for People with Disabilities. Microsoft, Business Loan Center, Inc (BLC) one of the nation's leading SBA guaranteed lenders, the National Cooperative Bank Development Corporation (NCBDC), and Community Options, Inc. are sponsoring the first nationwide community developer and financial

lending institution targeted exclusively to the advancement of the social and economic independence of Americans with disabilities. The Abilities Fund will help start, strengthen or grow small businesses to be owned by Americans with disabilities nationwide.

- STATUS:

Expanding Employment in IT Careers through PASS IT ON. Microsoft, the Information Technology Association of America, and Community Options plan to expand to several new states the highly successful PASS IT ON program which trains individuals with disabilities to be placed with IT companies as web developers, network administrators, programmers, and customer support specialists.

- STATUS:

Helping NGOs and corporations with implementing digital divide initiatives. The Narragansett Group (based in TX) is dedicated to aiding other groups in meeting their missions. It has offered \$100,000 in in-kind contributions of management, marketing, and public affairs assistance to support increased digital opportunities for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: We have the offer in writing, but it's unclear how this would exactly fit into the initiative.

Developing academic programs to further accessible design research. The College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has made a commitment to create a new educational program within the College of Engineering on design and human disability, with emphasis on Universal Design of electronic and information technologies. This commitment includes transfer of existing faculty FTE and the addition of two new tenure track positions.

- STATUS: Ready

Providing Internet and other communications capabilities to people with disabilities.

TeleServices International Grouping in partnership with UCP has offered to provide free internet access for life, including email, fax, voicemail, and integrated messaging for people with disabilities (not necessarily restricted). This would also include distribution outreach and on-going customer service, and is estimated at \$250 per person per year. The business model is based on bringing people to an internet portal, presumably sustained with advertising.

- STATUS: TSIG and UCP are ready to launch this effort, and welcomes input from the White House.

Creation of Disability Business Development Board. DOL has proposed a presidentially-appointed nine-member Board of CEOs to promote public-private partnerships to increase employment of people with disabilities.

- STATUS: DOL has drafted an E.O. to create the Board. It's unclear how this might interact with an expanded mission of the Welfare to Work Partnership focusing on employment of people with disabilities.

Training people with disabilities for IT jobs. DOL proposes a partnership with the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) and CompTIA (the Computer Technology Industry Association) to provide IT related training for people with disabilities, coupled with seeking funding from the H1-B program to support grants to pilot projects in sites across the country.

- STATUS:

Tailoring government information according to locality. DOL's www.disability.gov web site will utilize new technologies to seamlessly and "invisibly" deliver government information tailored to individuals' geographic location. This will support, for example, people with disabilities in finding local employment opportunities.

- STATUS:

Increasing High-tech opportunities for high school students with disabilities. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand its High

School/High Tech program to several new cities and states. These programs provide high school students with internships and other experiences with are high-tech businesses and government agencies.

- STATUS: Wisconsin and Colorado are ready for announcement. West Virginia, Michigan, and New York are in progress. Atlanta, Los Angeles, Orlando, and Chicago are ready for announcement. New York City is in progress.

Supporting Assistive Technology Act projects. An Amendment to the Labor/HHS appropriations bill includes an amendment that would guarantee continued funding for the state tech act projects, some of which could lose their funding as early as 2001. The conference agreement did not include the Senate amendment.

- STATUS:

Webcasting of Digital Divide Trip. IDEAL at NCR has proposed providing web casting for elements of the President's trip, perhaps including closed-captioning and description. This could result in a product that could be used in future settings, i.e. classroom instruction.

- STATUS: Ready to be put in place if desired.

Last Updated: September 4

Summary of Potential Deliverables

*What happened
to IOAs?*

High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy: Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. High-tech CEOs would commit to implement "best practices" such as: Training their workers to develop accessible products and services; Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services; Identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and, Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

- STATUS: Several CEOs have already "signed" on to the letter; working with associations and individual companies to secure additional commitments.

University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:

Presidents of the leading research universities would commit to: Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility; Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and, Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Several Presidents have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments.

Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities: Employers would agree to: Targeting disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals; Making assistive technology available to their employees; and, Promoting the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.

- STATUS: Several have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments.

Commission on Assistive Technology: We would announce that foundations are supporting a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disability community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas, such as financing assistive technology for people who may not be able to afford it and working with colleges and universities to improve education and outreach about accessible technology.

- STATUS: Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI) will likely be the "home" of this commission. Norm Coombs and Larry Scadden are working to develop the focus of the commission. We are working to identify possible members. Several foundations have indicated an interest in financially supporting the commission.

Making educational content accessible: The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready

Making the Web accessible: The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready?

Education and outreach about benefits of accessible design. NCR is partnering with IDEAL at NCR and EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information) to create a workshop, "The Global Business Benefits of Designing Accessible and Usable Electronic and Information Technology," offered on-line to 400 participants free of charge (i.e. educators and industry experts).

- STATUS: Ready

Support of computer labs in minority schools of Atlanta. NCR, in partnership with the Alliance of Black NCR Employees, will provide roughly 100 PCs to continue its efforts to setup computer labs in the Atlanta City School district.

- STATUS: Ready, but as proposed doesn't have a direct connection to people with disabilities (part of an existing initiative), but there may be a way the proposal could be designed to help meet the needs of minority students with disabilities.

Supporting New Jersey Entrepreneurs with disabilities. Microsoft, Community Options, the New Jersey Community Loan Fund, the New Jersey Technology Council, the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners and other public and private sector partners in New Jersey, are preparing to announce the establishment of the first-in-the-nation business incubator targeted to low income individuals including, as a priority, those with disabilities. It will provide low-cost office space, customized technology support, business planning expertise, and other support services to entrepreneurs with and without disabilities.

- STATUS: The 14,000 square-foot facility has not yet opened, but could be ready within a few weeks. Waiting on additional information from Community Options

Financial Lending Opportunities for People with Disabilities. Microsoft, Business Loan Center, Inc (BLC) one of the nation's leading SBA guaranteed lenders, the National Cooperative Bank Development Corporation (NCBDC), and Community Options, Inc. are sponsoring the first nationwide community developer and financial lending institution targeted exclusively to the advancement of the social and economic independence of Americans with disabilities. The Abilities Fund will help start, strengthen or grow small businesses to be owned by Americans with disabilities nationwide.

- STATUS:

Expanding Employment in IT Careers through PASS IT ON. Microsoft, the Information Technology Association of America, and Community Options plan to expand to several new states the highly successful PASS IT ON program which trains individuals with disabilities to be placed with IT companies as web developers, network administrators, programmers, and customer support specialists.

- STATUS:

Helping NGOs and corporations with implementing digital divide initiatives. The Narragansett Group (based in TX) is dedicated to aiding other groups in meeting their missions. It has offered \$100,000 in in-kind contributions of management, marketing, and public affairs assistance to support increased digital opportunities for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: We have the offer in writing, but it's unclear how this would exactly fit into the initiative.

Developing academic programs to further accessible design research. The College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has made a commitment to create a new educational program within the College of Engineering on design and human disability, with emphasis on Universal Design of electronic and information technologies. This commitment includes transfer of existing faculty FTE and the addition of two new tenure track positions.

- STATUS: Ready

Providing Internet and other communications capabilities to people with disabilities.

TeleServices International Grouping in partnership with UCP has offered to provide free internet access for life, including email, fax, voicemail, and integrated messaging for people with disabilities (not necessarily restricted). This would also include distribution outreach and on-going customer service, and is estimated at \$250 per person per year. The business model is based on bringing people to an internet portal, presumably sustained with advertising.

- STATUS: TSIG and UCP are ready to launch this effort, and welcomes input from the White House.

Creation of Disability Business Development Board. DOL has proposed a presidentially-appointed nine-member Board of CEOs to promote public-private partnerships to increase employment of people with disabilities.

- STATUS: DOL has drafted an E.O. to create this Board. It's unclear how this might interact with an expanded mission of the Welfare to Work Partnership focusing on employment of people with disabilities.

Training people with disabilities for IT jobs. DOL proposes a partnership with the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) and CompTIA (the Computer Technology Industry Association) to provide IT related training for people with disabilities, coupled with seeking funding from the H1-B program to support grants to pilot projects in sites across the country.

- STATUS:

Tailoring government information according to locality. DOL's www.disability.gov web site will utilize new technologies to seamlessly and "Invisibly" deliver government information tailored to individuals' geographic location. This will support, for example, people with disabilities in finding local employment opportunities.

- STATUS:

Increasing High-tech opportunities for high school students with disabilities. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand its High

School/High Tech program to several new cities and states. These programs provide high school students with internships and other experiences with high-tech businesses and government agencies.

- STATUS: Wisconsin and Colorado are ready for announcement. West Virginia, Michigan, and New York are in progress. Atlanta, Los Angeles, Orlando, and Chicago are ready for announcement. New York City is in progress.

Supporting Assistive Technology Act projects. An Amendment to the Labor/HHS appropriations bill includes an amendment that would guarantee continued funding for the state tech act projects, some of which could lose their funding as early as 2001. The conference agreement did not include the Senate amendment.

- STATUS:

Webcasting of Digital Divide Trip. IDEAL at MCR has proposed providing web casting for elements of the President's trip, perhaps including closed-captioning and description. This could result in a product that could be used in future settings, i.e. classroom instruction.

- STATUS: Ready to be put in place if desired.

DOJ
Becky

DD Trip

8.30.00.

HHS - We'll get back to you.

Census - information collection related to PWD + digital divide
use of computers + internet → sometime in Oct/Nov. Could be announced

- look for success stories
people + individuals

- SBA
on line classroom - if you have a computer
ecommerce summit planned

Alvarez / Appel NOV

regulations

DOJ

~~Re~~

Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP, Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP, Julie T. Bosland/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP, Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP
Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

Christina/Margy/Julie - one of you should participate in the call. Tom/Jonathan - pls include Christina, Margy and Julie on your emails. I'll be out Wed and Thurs so if you send only to me nothing will happen. Per the note I sent earlier, Liz Summy, Dep COS from HHS can't do 3. I didn't realize the 3 pm was with all the other agencies - it does seem a shame that someone from HHS can't be on the call. Unfortunately Liz is extra busy since COS is out this week, and her special assistant David Sobelman is also out.

Tom/Jonathan, if you want to ask Linda Cooper, her assistant to try to get someone else on the call, feel free. Otherwise you should proceed w/ setting up a separate call w/ Liz and others at HHS whenever works for all of you tomorrow.

----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 08/29/2000 07:04 PM -----



Thomas A. Kalil

08/29/2000 05:58:31 PM



Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

----- Forwarded by Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP on 08/29/2000 05:56 PM -----



Jonathan M. Young

08/29/2000 01:49:32 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP
Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

Tom Kalil (National Economic Council) and I have scheduled a conference call for tomorrow at 3 pm (Wednesday, 8/30) to review agency deliverables for the President's Digital Divide trip, which is scheduled for September 21. The call-in information is provided below. Please let me know via email if you plan to join.

We've established five main goals for the trip, and would like to discuss whether your agencies have any activities under way that can meet these goals and be ready for announcement:

1. **Existing IT products and services should be designed from the beginning to be more accessible for people with disabilities:** Currently, not all IT products and services are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, someone who is blind can't use the Web if a Web page uses graphics without also including text.
2. **We should improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** Through research and development, we can make it even easier for people to use IT - through technologies such as voice recognition for people who can't use a keyboard.
3. **Employers should take advantage of IT to expand employment for people with disabilities:** The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is much higher than the general population. Accessible IT could make it easier for employers to hire people with disabilities, and communications technology could allow more people with disabilities to work from their home. People with disabilities can thereby help fill the demand for high-skilled IT employees.
4. **Our existing "digital divide" initiatives should be designed so that people with disabilities can take advantage of them:** For example, our national network of Community Technology Centers should be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.
5. **We should address inequities in access to assistive technology:** There are amazing technologies (e.g., people who are paralyzed can operate computers through the use of eye-gaze or brain waves) that are simply too expensive for low or moderate-income households.

Call-in information:

Date: Wednesday, 8/30

Time: 3:00 PM, EDT (will not last beyond 4:00 PM)

Call-in number: 202-757-2104

Call-in Code: 26775

Message Sent To: _____

ADELAM@opm.gov
akeys@OSASPE.DHHS.GOV
anna.plitt@ssa.gov
bwilliam@osaspe.dhhs.gov
curtis_richards@ed.gov
EMaxwell@doc.gov
Fredric_Schroeder@ed.gov
gilliomj@pr.osd.mil
Gloria.Buster@fta.dot.gov
hclaypool@hcfa.gov
jlancast@pcepd.gov
jmazrui@fcc.gov
judy_heumann@ed.gov
kate_seelman@ed.gov
ken.mcgill@ssa.gov
laura_verner@ed.gov
liz.savage@usdoj.gov
Lydia.Bickford@sba.gov
marc.brenman@ost.dot.gov
Marie.P.Strahan@ssa.gov
mckinnon-william@dol.gov
michael.winter@fta.dot.gov
michele.kreiss@sba.gov
MICOVE@fcc.gov
nancy.segal@eeoc.gov
ogle-becky@dol.gov
paul.miller@eeoc.gov
pgregory@fcc.gov
Ronald_Levin@ita.doc.gov
Sara.Hamer@SSA.Gov
SBSEIDEN@opm.gov
sdenkens@os.dhhs.gov
ssaleh@ntia.doc.gov
sswenson@acf.dhhs.gov
susan.m.daniels@ssa.gov
Tanya.Queen@SSA.Gov
TTATE@intranet.reeusda.gov
Veronica_Hogan@ed.gov

Message Sent To:

Wendy Arends/WHO/EOP@EOP
Irene Bueno/WHO/EOP@EOP
Patrick M. Dorton/OPD/EOP@EOP
Stephanie A. Cutter/WHO/EOP@EOP
Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP
Laura A. Graham/WHO/EOP@EOP

Draft August 25, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

→ Boston

I. SUMMARY:

During your April trip on the "digital divide," you announced that you would have an event that focused specifically on how new information and communications technologies can help people with disabilities. This trip is currently scheduled for September 21st. This memo identifies our proposed objectives for the trip, some options on site venues, and potential deliverables.

II. GOALS FOR THE TRIP:

After extensive outreach with the disabilities community, we have identified 5 goals that we think you should use this event to promote -- by calling attention to the issue and by announcing concrete commitments by the government, industry, and non-profit organizations.

1. **Existing IT products and services should be designed from the beginning to be more accessible for people with disabilities:** Currently, not all IT products and services are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, someone who is blind can't use the Web if a Web page uses graphics without also including text.
2. **We should improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** Through research and development, we can make it even easier for people to use IT - through technologies such as voice recognition for people who can't use a keyboard.
3. **Employers should take advantage of IT to expand employment for people with disabilities:** The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is much higher than the general population. Accessible IT could make it easier for employers to hire people with disabilities, and communications technology could allow more people with disabilities to work from their home. People with disabilities can thereby help fill the demand for high-skilled IT employees.
4. **Our existing "digital divide" initiatives should be designed so that people with disabilities can take advantage of them:** For example, our national network of Community Technology Centers should be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.
5. **We should address inequities in access to assistive technology:** There are amazing technologies (e.g., people who are paralyzed can operate computers through the use of eye-gaze or brain waves) that are simply too expensive for low or moderate-income households.

III. SITE OPTIONS

Ideally, your trip would consist of two stops:

- The first stop would focus on the information technologies that can be used by people with disabilities. At this venue you could see demonstrations of assistive technology. We recommend **Madison, Wisconsin** or **Boston, Massachusetts**.
- At the second stop, you would visit a successful program that is using technology to allow people with disabilities to work, improve their health care, or pursue a science or engineering degree at a university. You could also do a roundtable with CEOs and people from the disabilities community that would discuss what steps the United States must take to ensure that all Americans with disabilities are benefiting from these new technologies. We recommend **Atlanta, Georgia** or **Kalamazoo, Michigan** or **Seattle, Washington**.

A. MORNING EVENT

Madison, Wisconsin

The University of Wisconsin, Madison campus would make a great backdrop for an event on accessible technology:

- It is the home of the Trace Research and Development Center, which is funded by the Department of Education to make IT more accessible for people with disabilities. Over the years, they have worked to make computers, the Internet, ATM machines, pagers and voice mail more accessible.
- Several of the courses at the University of Wisconsin teach undergraduate and graduate students about accessibility issues, and a number of engineering students have used their knowledge to develop accessibility projects in the community.
- Statewide, Wisconsin is a leader in hiring people with disabilities. With one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country for decades, its area businesses have been innovative in finding ways to bring people with disabilities into the economic mainstream.

Boston, Massachusetts

There are two very important accessibility projects in the Boston area:

- MIT is the home of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative. The World Wide Web Consortium is the industry consortium that develops the standards for the Web. The Web Accessibility Initiative has developed guidelines, which, if adopted widely, will make the web accessible for people with disabilities. For example, blind people rely on screen readers to "read" the text on a Web page. If a company or

government web page uses graphics without also providing text, it will be impossible for someone who is blind to access it. The Department of Education is planning to increase its support for this project. The World Wide Web Consortium is run by Tim Berners-Lee, the man who invented the Web and has chosen to work on continuing to improve it as opposed to profit from the Internet "gold-rush."

- WGBH is the home of the National Center for Accessible Media, which is the national leader in closed captioning and descriptive video services. The Department of Education will be giving the National Center for Accessible Media a grant to develop standards to make "e-learning" accessible for people with disabilities.

Message

- We need to ensure that we develop IT products and services that are accessible for people with disabilities.
- Doing this will help everyone, not just people with disabilities, just as curb-cuts help families with baby strollers in addition to people with wheel-chairs.

Sequence Of Events

- You would see a demonstration of accessible technologies. An example is the "Eye-Gaze" system, which allows people with spinal cord injuries to operate a computer merely by looking at different parts of the screen.
- A speaking program with people from the high-tech industry and the disabilities community. You would announce most of the deliverables at the morning event.

B. AFTERNOON EVENT

Atlanta, Georgia

There are a number of excellent disabilities programs in Atlanta that would make appropriate venues for your trip, including:

- **Shepherd Center Telerehabilitation Program.** The Shepherd Center is a specialty hospital serving people with disabilities resulting from impairments that affect the central nervous system, such as spinal cord injuries and brain injuries. Through grants from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Education, and partnerships with the private sector, the Shepherd Center is now expanding the scope of patient treatment through telerehabilitation. Under this new program, patients will be provided a personal computer with a customized platform supporting videoconferencing, remote monitoring of vital health measurements, Internet access, multimedia instructional materials. The program will improve community reintegration (including return to work), bridge the gap

of services for people in remote areas, reduce secondary complications, and incur lower overall health care and support costs.

- **Georgia High School High Tech.** With both public and private funding and the cooperation of businesses, federal and state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and local school districts, High School High Tech uses site visits, mentoring, shadowing, and paid summer internships to provide students with opportunities to learn more about careers in scientific, engineering and technology-related fields. Georgia's HSHT program is one of the most active and extensive programs in the country. One group of students was recently honored at the Air and Space Museum for its successful design and execution of a Space Shuttle butterfly experiment.

Kalamazoo, Michigan

Kalamazoo has two programs that increase employment for people with disabilities:

- **Western Michigan University.** In cooperation with IBM, Smartforce.com, and Monster.com -- the Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology (ARPCT) is about to launch a national on-line support center for preparing people with disabilities for IT careers. The corporate partners have already donated over half million in this project to bring computer-based IT training to homebound and other individuals with disabilities.
- **Michigan Career and Technical Institute.** MCIT is the second largest comprehensive vocational rehabilitation training center in the nation. It trains over 800 individuals per year in a 10 different technology-related areas at its Planwell campus and many more through its statewide distance learning network. It offers two-year residential technical training for people with disabilities seeking new career opportunities. It is operated by the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program.

Seattle, Washington

The University of Washington at Seattle is the home of an NSF-funded, award-winning program called DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology). The program has a number of elements:

- It helps high-school students with disabilities pursue careers and college;
- Participants in the DO-IT program that are in college become Ambassadors and mentors to high school students;
- Students with disabilities participate in work-based learning;
- Young people with disabilities participate in a summer camp to learn how to use computers and the Internet;

- College faculty and administrators are given training on ways to work successfully with students with disabilities.

Message

- Information technology can help people with disabilities increase their participation in the workforce and go to college. If we want to be able to continue to grow our economy, we need to ensure that all people with disabilities have these opportunities.

Sequence Of Events

- Tour the program and meet with the people that are participating in it.
- Roundtable with employers, people with disabilities and experts to discuss future challenges in making assistive technology affordable to all Americans.

IV. POTENTIAL DELIVERABLES:

We are still working on developing additional deliverables, but these are some of the possibilities that we have identified so far. The disabilities community has urged us to focus on getting the private sector to make their products more accessible, not merely making specific financial commitments.

1. **High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy:** Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. High-tech CEOs would commit to implement "best practices" such as:

- Training their workers to develop accessible products and services;
- Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services;
- Identify and fix accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and
- Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

2. **University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:** Presidents of the leading research universities would commit to:

- Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility;
- Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and
- Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

specific commitments

3. **Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities:** Employers would agree to:

- Target disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals;
- Make assistive technology available to their employees; and
- Promote the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.

letter signed before went

4. **Commission on Assistive Technology:** We would announce that foundations are supporting a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disabilities community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas, such as financing of assistive technology for people who may not be able to afford it.

Medicaid reimbursement

??

5. **Making educational content accessible:** The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.

6. **Making the Web accessible:** The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities.

September 21, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Interagency Task Force to Examine the Role of Medicare and
Medicaid Coverage of Assistive Technologies in Encouraging
the Employment of Individuals with Disabilities.

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, the last legislation that I signed during the 20th Century, was a breakthrough in helping the disabled to work. Individuals with disabilities can return to work and retain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage -- no longer will the disabled be forced to make an unfair choice between work and essential health care coverage. The Work Incentives legislation affirms that people with disabilities can and do make valuable contributions to society through participation in the American workforce.

In ensuring that the disabled have the same opportunities to work as all Americans, our next step is to take advantage of the remarkable advances in so-called assistive technologies -- innovative devices that facilitate independent living and meaningful employment for the disabled. I recognized the importance of assistive technology devices in signing the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 which funds State-based programs supporting their use. This year, I have also included in my budget \$100 million for disability and technology research at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, a \$14 million increase over FY 2000. The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research overseen by the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Veteran Affairs also provide \$30 million each in grants for assistive technology research. Together, these funds will support comprehensive research and education on the use of assistive technologies to further community integration and labor force participation for individuals with disabilities.

While the Work Incentives legislation extended Medicare and Medicaid to disabled workers, I believe the federal government must make a comprehensive effort to determine how best to make such programs more meaningful to individuals with disabilities, including improved coverage of assistive technologies. It is especially important to examine how medically necessary assistive technologies may facilitate independent living but also support individuals with disabilities in working.

Today, I am holding an event on the digital divide highlighting the importance and potential of assistive technology in providing access to the Internet for the disabled. I am also directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take responsibility for convening an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive

Technologies that includes the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Labor and Veterans Affairs. The Task Force shall study the role that Medicare and Medicaid does and should play in the provision of assistive technology devices. The work of the Task Force is intended to provide a framework for future Medicare and Medicaid coverage decisions that compliment the Administration's overall efforts to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Therefore, I hereby direct this Task Force to conduct a study on the role of Medicare and Medicaid in covering assistive technologies that encourage employment of individuals with disabilities. The study should:

- Examine current Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technology devices. Assess the current coverage criteria under Medicare and Medicaid with comparisons to the private insurance market. Review and evaluate other past and on-going research on Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies.
- Seek input from the disability community in identifying the types of medically necessary assistive technologies that facilitate independent living generally but also support disabled individuals in employment. Develop criteria for identifying such devices.
- Determine whether provision of assistive technologies may substitute for other Medicare and Medicaid health care services such as personal care services and supports which are covered by Medicaid.
- Analyze Medicare and Medicaid medical necessity guidelines to determine whether they can complement employment while continuing to meet the health care focus of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. As we move towards a concept of disability that includes employment, there is a need to study the intersection of the concepts of disability, medical necessity, and employment.
- Determine an appropriate delineation of responsibility for coverage of assistive technologies between publicly financed health care and employers by evaluating employers' responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Assistive Technology Act. Explore how individuals with disabilities, employers, public and private health insurance, and other public programs should share in the cost of financing assistive technologies.
- Make recommendations for administrative and legislative changes to the Medicare and Medicaid programs to encourage coverage of medically necessary assistive technologies that also support employment of individuals with disabilities.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

###

Adjusted R-squared	.139	N	5450
--------------------	------	---	------

Notes: Regressions estimated using 1997 cross-section of MTF data, by linear probability model; mean of dependent variable is 7.329. Standard errors in parentheses.

Table 3: Smoking Participation Coefficient Stability, MTF Public Use Data

Covariate	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	1976	1986	1997	1986-1976	1997-1986	1997-1976
Smsa	-.041 (.01)	-.034 (.01)	-.028 (.01)	.007 (.014)	.006 (.014)	.013 (.014)
Age*	.017 (.009)	-.003 (.008)	.013 (.007)	-.02 (.012)	*.016 (.011)	*-.004 (.011)
Black	.025 (.013)	-.2 (.012)	-.31 (.012)	-.226 (.018)	-.1 (.017)	-.326 (.018)
Other Non-White	-.011 (.013)	-.075 (.011)	-.134 (.01)	-.065 (.017)	-.059 (.015)	-.124 (.016)
Works 1/0	.009 (.012)	.001 (.012)	-.018 (.012)	-.008 (.017)	-.019 (.017)	-.027 (.017)
Job hours per week	.003 (.0004)	.002 (.001)	.002 (.001)	-.0009 (.0007)	.0004 (.0008)	-.0004 (.0007)
Job inc/week (/100)	.04 (.001)	.03 (.01)	.05 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.02)	0.00 (.02)
Oth inc/week (/100)	0.00 (.01)	.04 (.02)	.07 (.01)	.04 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.07 (.02)
Male	-.063 (.008)	-.067 (.007)	-.012 (.008)	-.004 (.011)	.055 (.011)	.051 (.011)
Grew up rural	-.028 (.013)	-.039 (.013)	-.036 (.014)	-.011 (.019)	.003 (.019)	-.008 (.019)
Grew up town	.001 (.011)	-.035 (.011)	-.018 (.012)	-.036 (.016)	.017 (.016)	-.02 (.016)
Grew up urban	.024 (.011)	-.012 (.01)	-.031 (.011)	-.035 (.015)	-.019 (.015)	-.055 (.015)
Dad's ed<h. school	.01 (.011)	-.019 (.011)	-.008 (.013)	-.029 (.016)	.011 (.017)	-.018 (.017)
Mom's ed<h. school	-.023 (.011)	.001 (.011)	-.032 (.014)	.023 (.016)	-.033 (.018)	-.009 (.018)
Dad's ed some coll	-.007 (.014)	.003 (.011)	.008 (.012)	.009 (.018)	.005 (.016)	.014 (.018)
Mom's ed some coll	.007 (.013)	.002 (.01)	.023 (.011)	-.004 (.016)	.021 (.015)	.017 (.017)
Dad college-ed	.021 (.012)	.013 (.01)	.025 (.011)	-.009 (.016)	.012 (.015)	.003 (.016)
Mom college-ed	-.02 (.013)	.009 (.01)	.037 (.01)	.028 (.016)	.029 (.014)	.057 (.016)
GPA	-.282 (.02)	-.203 (.018)	-.265 (.02)	.08 (.027)	-.063 (.027)	.017 (.028)
Northeast	.022 (.01)	.009 (.01)	.014 (.011)	-.013 (.014)	.005 (.015)	-.008 (.015)
South	-.007 (.01)	-.029 (.009)	-.026 (.01)	-.022 (.014)	.003 (.014)	-.019 (.014)
West	-.11 (.011)	-.106 (.011)	-.055 (.013)	.004 (.015)	.051 (.017)	.056 (.017)
Mom ever worked	.007 (.008)	.016 (.008)	.008 (.01)	.005 (.012)	-.008 (.013)	-.004 (.013)
Parents<2	-.001 (.01)	.022 (.008)	.021 (.009)	.022 (.013)	-.001 (.012)	.022 (.013)
Married	.039 (.025)	-.095 (.025)	-.037 (.027)	-.134 (.036)	.058 (.037)	-.077 (.037)
Engaged	.054 (.015)	.053 (.015)	.069 (.016)	-.001 (.021)	.016 (.022)	.015 (.022)
Seperated/divorced	.066 (.058)	.004 (.042)	.045 (.041)	-.062 (.071)	.042 (.059)	-.022 (.071)
Coll prep program	-.038 (.01)	-.061 (.009)	-.023 (.009)	-.023 (.013)	.038 (.013)	.015 (.013)
Voc'l program	.032 (.011)	.023 (.012)	.027 (.014)	-.009 (.016)	.004 (.018)	-.005 (.018)
No plan attend coll	.093 (.012)	.073 (.012)	.074 (.014)	-.02 (.017)	.001 (.019)	-.019 (.019)
Prob won't go coll	.044 (.012)	.042 (.012)	.042 (.014)	-.003 (.017)	0 (.018)	-.003 (.019)
Prob will go coll	.025 (.011)	.004 (.01)	.017 (.01)	-.021 (.014)	.013 (.014)	-.008 (.015)
Days missed school	.019 (.001)	.016 (.001)	.016 (.001)	-.003 (.001)	0 (.001)	-.003 (.001)
Relig services reg'ly	-.035 (.004)	-.029 (.004)	0 (.004)	.006 (.006)	.029 (.006)	.036 (.006)
Religion important	-.029 (.005)	-.014 (.004)	-.005 (.005)	.016 (.006)	.008 (.006)	.024 (.006)

Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: draft request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies

----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 09/06/2000 12:56 PM -----



Thomas A. Kalil

09/06/2000 12:54:20 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: draft request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies

----- Forwarded by Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP on 09/06/2000 12:54 PM -----



Jonathan M. Young

09/05/2000 01:05:23 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

bcc:

Subject: Re: draft request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies 

Haven't looked at the memo yet, but this would be absolutely awesome.

Thomas A. Kalil



Thomas A. Kalil

09/05/2000 12:39:27 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: draft request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies

----- Forwarded by Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP on 09/05/2000 12:39 PM -----



Edwin C. Park
09/05/2000 12:32:43 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: draft request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies

FYI:

----- Forwarded by Edwin C. Park/OPD/EOP on 09/05/2000 12:32 PM -----



Edwin C. Park
09/05/2000 12:31:56 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: request for HHS study on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies



HHS Memorandum 9-5

As many of you already know, NEC is taking the lead on a digital divide event for 9/21 focusing on access to the Internet and assistive technologies for the disabled. A possible deliverable for the event would be an executive memorandum from the President requesting HHS to convene an interagency task force to study Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies that are medically necessary/facilitate independent living but also support a return to work by disabled individuals. The purpose of the study would be to educate the next Administration on the subject and provide administrative/legislative recommendations on how to encourage coverage of such devices. Please find attached for your review a draft of the memorandum. Please send me your comments as soon as possible. Thanks.

Message Sent To: _____

Christopher C. Jennings/OPD/EOP@EOP
Devorah R. Adler/OPD/EOP@EOP
Jeanne Lambrew/OMB/EOP@EOP
Jonathan Blum/OMB/EOP@EOP
Jeffrey A. Farkas/OMB/EOP@EOP
bwilliam@osaspe.dhhs.gov @ inet
hclaypool@hcfa.gov @ inet
coconnor2@hcfa.gov @ inet
jhorvath@os.dhhs.gov @ inet

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP

Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

Tom Kalil (National Economic Council) and I have scheduled a conference call for tomorrow at 3 pm (Wednesday, 8/30) to review agency deliverables for the President's Digital Divide trip, which is scheduled for September 21. The call-in information is provided below. Please let me know via email if you plan to join.

We've established five main goals for the trip, and would like to discuss whether your agencies have any activities under way that can meet these goals and be ready for announcement:

1. **Existing IT products and services should be designed from the beginning to be more accessible for people with disabilities:** Currently, not all IT products and services are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, someone who is blind can't use the Web if a Web page uses graphics without also including text.
2. **We should improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** Through research and development, we can make it even easier for people to use IT - through technologies such as voice recognition for people who can't use a keyboard.
3. **Employers should take advantage of IT to expand employment for people with disabilities:** The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is much higher than the general population. Accessible IT could make it easier for employers to hire people with disabilities, and communications technology could allow more people with disabilities to work from their home. People with disabilities can thereby help fill the demand for high-skilled IT employees.
4. **Our existing "digital divide" initiatives should be designed so that people with disabilities can take advantage of them:** For example, our national network of Community Technology Centers should be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.
5. **We should address inequities in access to assistive technology:** There are amazing technologies (e.g., people who are paralyzed can operate computers through the use of eye-gaze or brain waves) that are simply too expensive for low or moderate-income households.

Call-in information:

Date: Wednesday, 8/30

Time: 3:00 PM, EDT (will not last beyond 4:00 PM)

Call-in number: 202-757-2104

Call-in Code: 26775

Message Sent To:

ADELAM@opm.gov
akeys@OSASPE.DHHS.GOV
anna.plitt@ssa.gov
bwilliam@osaspe.dhhs.gov
curtis_richards@ed.gov
EMaxwell@doc.gov
Fredric_Schroeder@ed.gov
gilliomj@pr.osd.mil
Gloria.Buster@fta.dot.gov
hclaypool@hcfa.gov
jlancast@pcepd.gov
jmazrui@fcc.gov
judy_heumann@ed.gov
kate_seelman@ed.gov
ken.mcgill@ssa.gov
laura_verner@ed.gov
liz.savage@usdoj.gov
Lydia.Bickford@sba.gov
marc.brenman@ost.dot.gov
Marie.P.Strahan@ssa.gov
mckinnon-william@dol.gov
michael.winter@fta.dot.gov
michele.kreiss@sba.gov
MICOVE@fcc.gov
nancy.segal@eeoc.gov
ogle-becky@dol.gov
paul.miller@eeoc.gov
pgregory@fcc.gov
Ronald_Levin@ita.doc.gov
Sara.Hamer@SSA.Gov
SBSEIDEN@opm.gov
sdenkens@os.dhhs.gov
ssaleh@ntia.doc.gov
sswenson@acf.dhhs.gov
susan.m.daniels@ssa.gov
Tanya.Queen@SSA.Gov
TTATE@intranet.reeusda.gov
Veronica_Hogan@ed.gov

Message Sent To:

Wendy Arends/WHO/EOP@EOP
Irene Bueno/WHO/EOP@EOP
Patrick M. Dorton/OPD/EOP@EOP
Stephanie A. Cutter/WHO/EOP@EOP
Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP
Laura A. Graham/WHO/EOP@EOP

8/28

TO: Tom Kalil
Jonathan Yang
Manny Waller
Christina Ho

FROM: Andrew Kane

Here's info on the SSA PASS Program mentioned.
It's a little over a year old but I think it's still
pretty accurate.

I've also attached a one pager on the Assets for
Independence Act IDI Demo Program
operated by IDI.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS

(Assets for Independence Demonstration Program)

The Assets for Independence Demonstration Program was established by the Assets for Independence Act (AFI Act), under title IV of the Community Opportunities, Accountability and Training and Educational Services Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, P.L. 105-285. This demonstration program was authorized at \$25 million annually for five years.

The Assets for Independence Demonstration Program is a directed, matched savings program for low income working individuals and families. Participants enter into a Savings Plan Agreement with the project grantee which establishes a schedule and goal of savings from earned income, to be matched at an agreed rate which can be from one dollar to eight dollars for each dollar saved. Currently, IDAs may be expended for: (1) the purchase of a principal residence by a first-time home buyer; (2) the capitalization of a business; or (3) expenses of post-secondary education. The Administration's FY 2001 budget also proposes to also low-income families to use Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) to save for the purchase of a car to be used to get to work.

The major goals of the program are to establish demonstration projects to determine: (1) the social, civic, psychological, and economic effects of providing to individuals and families with limited means an incentive to accumulate assets by saving a portion of their earned income; (2) the extent to which an asset-based policy that promotes saving for post-secondary education, homeownership and small business capitalization may be used to enable individuals and families with limited means to increase their economic self-sufficiency; and (3) the extent to which an asset-based policy stabilizes and improves families and the community in which the families live.

Eligible applicants are private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, or State and local governmental agencies or Tribal governments applying jointly with eligible not-for-profit organizations. Grantees are selected competitively on the basis of applications which present the background and capabilities of the applicant, and a description of the target population; project theory, design, and plan; a reasonable budget; a plan for providing information needed for program evaluation; additional resources available to support project participants; and a description of the results and benefits expected to result from the project. Applications must include a commitment for a cash non-Federal share equal to the amount of the Federal grant requested.

This program was new in FY 1999, when 38 applications were competitively funded in twenty-three states and the District of Columbia, ranging in grant amount from \$6000 to \$500,000 for a total of some \$7.55 million. In addition, under the terms of the legislation two States with existing statewide programs, Indiana and Pennsylvania, were "grandfathered" into the program with one-year grants of \$930,000 each. Together, these grants will support a projected 10,200 Individual Development Accounts over the next five years. There was a comparable appropriation of \$10 million for FY 2000, which is expected to provide funding for approximately 40 additional five-year projects. The Administration Budget for FY 2001 requests funding the program at its full authorized level of \$25 million.



**SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF PROGRAM BENEFITS
SUITE 760 ALTMAYER BUILDING
6401 SECURITY BOULEVARD
BALTIMORE, MD 21235-6401
FAX NUMBER 410-965-8582**

CC: AIC
CR

Let's like it
should help for
2 of 3 SSAs
IDAs -
can SSA send letter/
guidance
IDAs covered
any rules?

TO:

FROM:

- Richard Saul, ACF
- Eugenia Chough, DPC

DIANE BLACKMAN,
SSA, ORB

LOCATION/ORGANIZATION:

OFFICE OF PROGRAM BENEFITS

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

(410) 965-3571

FAX NUMBER:

TOTAL PAGES:

DATE: 5/6/99

- Richard Saul 202-401-5718

- Eugenia Chough 202-456-7431

COVER + 9

MESSAGE

RE: Individual Development Accounts/Plans for Achieving
Self-Support
(PASS)

As promised, here is some basic information on PASS:
a pamphlet/available on SSA website; article from SSA's internal
magazine describing the new service function established to develop
expertise in PASS/employment support; map of cadre sites. Important:
cadres cover entire country -- PASS available nationwide. PASS
helps disabled people who want to work or increase their work.
In support of the priority of helping disabled beneficiaries enter
the workforce, SSA just created a new office: Office of Employment
Support Programs. PASS (used to be handled by our office, OPB) now
OESP handles. OESP is aware of the IDA/PASS connection.
I'll be happy to be your contact if/when you'd like to know
more and get you connected with the right people in OESP.

**Social Security****Working While Disabled****A Guide To Plans For
Achieving Self-Support****Publication No. 05-11017
March 1999
ICN 480302**

What Is A Plan For Achieving Self--Support?

Basically, a plan for achieving self--support, or PASS for short, is a plan for your future. Many people with disabilities want to work, and you're probably one of them. But maybe you need to go back to school before you can get a job. Or, maybe you'd like to start your own business, but you don't have the money. Whatever your work goal may be, a PASS can help you reach it.

A PASS lets you set aside money and/or other things you own to help you reach your goal. For example, you could set aside money to start a business or to go to school or to get training for a job.

Your goal **must be a job that will produce sufficient earnings to reduce your dependency on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments.** A PASS is meant to help you acquire those items, services or skills you need so that you can compete with able--bodied persons for an entry level job in a professional, business or trade environment. If you have graduated from college or a trade/technical school, we usually consider you capable of obtaining such a position without the assistance of a PASS. You can contact your local Social Security office to find out whether a PASS is appropriate for you.

How Will A Plan Affect My SSI Benefit?

Under regular SSI rules, your SSI benefit is reduced by the other income you have. But the income you set aside for a PASS **doesn't** reduce your SSI benefit. This means you can get a higher SSI benefit when you have a PASS. But you can't get more than the maximum SSI benefit for the state where you live.

Money you save or things you own, such as property or equipment, that you set aside for a PASS won't count against the resource limit of \$2,000 (or \$3,000 for a couple). Under regular SSI rules, you wouldn't be eligible for SSI if your resources are above \$2,000. But with a plan, you may set aside some resources so you would be eligible.

Who Can Have A PASS?

You can, if:

- you want to work;
- you get SSI (or can qualify for SSI) because of blindness or a disability; or
- you have or expect to receive income (other than SSI) and/or resources to set aside toward a work goal.

What Kinds Of Expenses Can A Plan Help Pay For?

A plan may be used to pay for a variety of expenses that are necessary to help you reach your work goal.

For example, your plan may help you save for:

- supplies to start a business;
- tuition, fees, books and supplies that are needed for school or training;
- employment services, such as payments for a job coach;
- attendant care or child care expenses;
- equipment and tools to do the job;
- transportation to and from work; or
- uniforms, special clothing and safety equipment.

These are only examples. Not all of these will apply to every plan. You might have other expenses depending on your goal.

How Do I Set Up A Plan?

Ask your local Social Security office for a copy of PASS form, SSA--545--BK. The form collects most of the information we need to review your plan.

Then, follow the steps below to set up your plan:

1. Choose a work goal. It should be a job that you're interested in doing and that you think you'll be able to do when you complete your plan. We can refer you to a vocational rehabilitation counselor who can help you choose your goal. You also can set up a PASS to cover any costs for the vocational services, including testing.
2. Find out all the steps you need to take to reach your goal and how long it will take you to complete each step.
3. Decide what items or services you will need to reach your goal.

Note: Each person will need different things to reach his or her goal. For example, if you want to work in a restaurant, you may need training to learn how to cook. If you want to become a computer programmer, you may need a college degree and a computer. If you want to start a business, you may need to buy equipment and supplies.

4. Get several cost estimates for the things you need to achieve your goal.

5. Find out how much money you'll need to set aside each month in order to pay for them.

Note: If you're setting aside income for your plan, your SSI benefit usually will increase to help pay your living expenses. The people at Social Security can estimate what your new SSI payment will be if you set up your plan.

6. Keep any money you save for your goal **separate** from any other money you have. The easiest way to do this is to open a separate bank account for the money you save under your plan. But, if you don't open a separate bank account, you must be able to tell us exactly how you're keeping the money separate.

7. Also include a business plan if you intend to start a business. Your business plan should explain:

- what kind of business you want to start (e.g., a restaurant, a print shop);
- how you will pay for your business;
- where you will set up your business (e.g., rent a store, share space);
- your hours of operation;
- how you will market your product or service;
- who your suppliers and customers will be; and
- your expected earnings.

Note: We encourage you to talk with a local banker, the Small Business Administration, a vocational counselor or other knowledgeable people about writing your business plan.

8. Complete all the questions on form SSA--545--BK, and sign and date it.

9. Take or mail the form to your local Social Security office.

Who May Help Me

Set Up A Plan?

You may set up a plan yourself or get help from:

- a vocational rehabilitation counselor;
- an organization that helps people with disabilities;
- an employer;
- a friend or relative; or
- the people at your Social Security office.

Note: Some organizations charge a fee for writing a PASS. The Social Security office may be able to refer you to someone who does not charge a fee.

What Does Social Security Do After I Submit My Plan?

After you submit your plan, Social Security will:

- review the plan to make sure it is complete;
- decide if there is a good chance that you can reach your goal;
- decide if the things you want to buy to reach your goal are necessary and are reasonably priced;
- decide if any changes are needed and discuss those changes with you; and
- send you a letter to tell you if the plan is approved or denied.

If your plan is approved, Social Security will contact you from time to time to make sure that you are doing what your plan says you will do to reach your goal. Make sure that you keep receipts for the items and services you have bought under the plan.

What Happens If My Plan Is Not Approved?

If we do not approve your plan, you have a right to appeal the decision. The letter you get will explain your appeal rights and tell you what you need to do to file an appeal. **You also may submit a new plan to us.**

Can I Change My Plan After It Is Approved?

Yes. However, you must get approval from us **before** you make any changes. Tell the Social Security office **in writing** what changes you want to make, such as a change in the amount of money you set aside monthly or a change in the expenses you will have. We will review your request and let you know if the changes are approved.

It is very important that you tell us as soon as possible about any changes that might affect your plan.

What Happens If I Cannot Complete My Plan?

If you cannot complete your plan, you may set up a new plan with a new work goal. If you don't set up a new plan, any money or other things set aside under the original plan **may** count toward the \$2,000 resource limit for getting SSI. If your resources are over the limit, it's possible you may lose your eligibility for SSI.

Also, we will start counting the income you were setting aside under the plan. Tell us as soon as possible that you cannot complete your plan. Then, you won't have to pay back any extra SSI you got while you were following your plan.

How Will A Plan Affect Other Benefits I Get?

You should check with the agency that is responsible for those benefits to find out if the plan (and the extra SSI) might affect those benefits.

In many cases, income and resources set aside under a plan will not be counted for food stamps and housing assistance provided through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. **But, it's important that you contact the particular agency to find out how your benefits will be affected.**

Are There Any Other Rules That May Help?

Yes. Other SSI rules may help you while you work. They can help you keep more of your SSI benefit, and they can help you keep your Medicaid. There are also some special rules for students. For more information, ask Social Security for the booklet, *Working While Disabled-How We*

Can Help (Publication No. 05--10095).

Any Questions?

If you want more information or if you want to make an appointment with a Social Security representative, just give us a call. Our telephone number is 1-800-772-1213. Recorded information is available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. You can speak to a service representative between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on business days. Our lines are busiest early in the month, so, if your business can wait, it's best to call at other times. When you call, have your Social Security number handy.

People who are deaf or hard of hearing may call our toll-free "TTY" number, 1-800-325-0778, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on business days.

You also can reach us on the Internet. Type www.ssa.gov to access Social Security information.

We treat all calls confidentially—whether they're made to our toll-free numbers or to one of our local offices. We also want to ensure that you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some incoming and outgoing telephone calls.

Social Security Administration
SSA Publication No. 05-11017
March 1999
ICN 480302

PASS

Specialists help beneficiaries achieve self-support

Some disability beneficiaries who want to return to work get the opportunity with a Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS), a provision of the SSI program. To help these beneficiaries reach their work goals, SSA created a group of PASS specialists.

"A PASS allows an SSI recipient to set aside income and resources to be used for the expenses of reaching a work goal, such as starting a business, going to school or purchasing work-related equipment," said Program Analyst Nancy Lloyd, Office of Public Service and Operations Support. "These funds are not counted in determining either eligibility for SSI or the payment amount."

To participate in the PASS program, a disability recipient must first develop a plan to reach his or her work goal. Field office personnel play an important role in informing claimants and beneficiaries about the availability of PASS and how to develop one. Once submitted, the plan is sent to a PASS specialist who determines whether the proposal has a clear, attainable goal and a realistic plan for achieving it.

"The PASS program is moving toward a case management model where the PASS specialist is responsible for monitoring the

participant's progress on a continuing basis," said Nancy.

There are currently 43 PASS specialists in 19 teams, called cadres, around the country.

"The PASS caseload is a small but very important portion of our SSI caseload, requiring a high level of expertise from PASS specialists," said Nancy. "We recently brought all of the PASS specialists to headquarters for a very intense two-and-a-half-week training course."

"During the training, the PASS specialists were briefed on Social Security policy changes and clarifications and received training in vocational rehabilitation counseling and public speaking. The specialists also received hands-on experience with vocational assessment software."

In addition to working closely with PASS participants, the Dallas region cadre of four specialists in Fort Worth, Texas, train field office personnel and vocational rehabilitation case workers in PASS policies and procedures.

"We want to make sure that our claims reps and voc rehab workers have a good working knowledge of the PASS program so they'll be able to make some decisions about cases before we receive them for further development," said Dallas PASS Specialist Peggy Rios.

"We also make an effort to share ideas, trends and best practices about the PASS program with other regional cadres," added Sam Trimiar, another Dallas cadre member. "Currently, we're processing 90 percent of our PASS requests in 30 days or less."

Recently, the Dallas cadre has reached out to build partnerships with state agencies and PASS advocates.

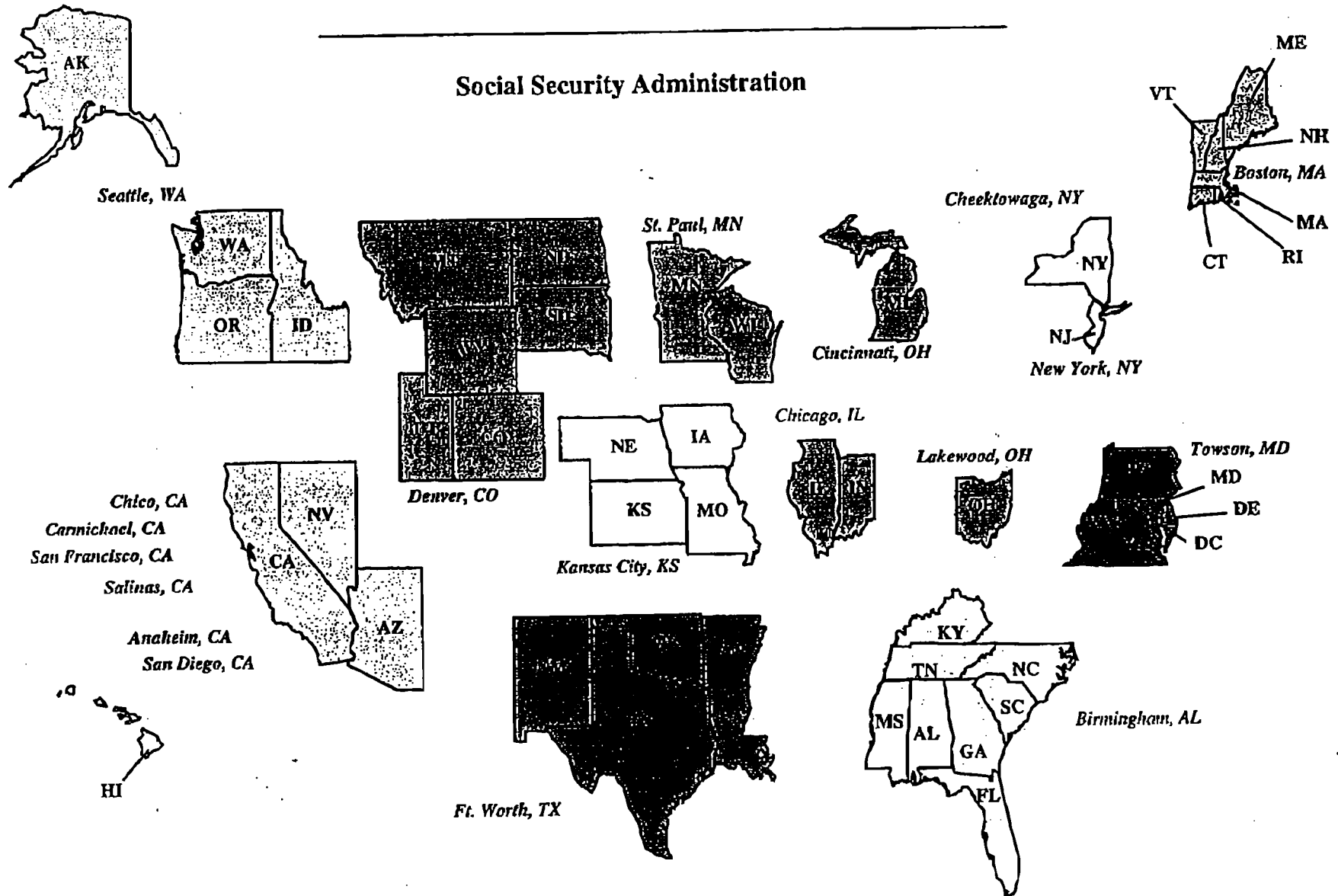
"We frequent meet with representatives in the community who can help us assist our PASS participants," said Dallas PASS Specialist Dale Allen. "Last year, our cadre attended a multi-state conference on building partnerships with state agencies."

"In addition, we formed partnerships with Fort Worth Reach, a local voc rehab agency, and the Texas Rehabilitation Commission. We also activated a special toll-free number for PASS applicants, their representatives and PASS advocates. All of the cadres have toll-free numbers now."

"The PASS specialists in the Dallas cadre and the other 18 cadres across the country are committed to helping highly motivated disability beneficiaries succeed with the PASS program," said Nancy. "It feels good to help disabled beneficiaries get back to work." ♦

Locations of PASS Cadres

Social Security Administration



Plans for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)



For general information about PASS, as well as information about Social Security and Supplemental Security Income, call 1-800-772-1213 from anywhere in the U.S. For specific information about PASS, call your area's PASS cadre

PASS CADRE	TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER	LOCAL TELEPHONE NUMBER
Anaheim, CA	800-551-1507	714-502-9233
Birmingham, AL	800-254-9489	205-801-4444
Boston, MA	800-297-4291, ext. 3017	617-565-8906 ext. 3017
Carmichael, CA	888-383-1862	916-338-3705 ext. 3210 or 3212
Cheektowaga, NY	800-510-5680	716-685-8039
Chicago, IL	800-842-0588	312-575-5970 or 5969
Chico, CA	800-551-1762	530-345-9788
Cincinnati, OH	888-674-6249	513-821-9424, ext. 3008 or 3009
Denver, CO	800-551-1034	303-235-0511 or 0637
Ft. Worth, TX	888-287-7845	817-978-1772 ext. 3642 or 3471
New York, NY	800-551-9583	212-264-3344, ext. 4045 or 4046
Kansas City, KS	800-551-9289	913-621-3014
Lakewood, OH	800-551-2056	216-228-2926
St. Paul, MN	800-551-9796	612-290-0304 ext. 3061, 3074 or 3018
Salinas, CA	877-361-4796	831-443-9195 ext. 220
San Diego, CA	888-674-6250	619-557-6605
San Francisco, CA	877-612-8474	415-744-5773 ext. 3242
Seattle, WA	888-674-6251	206-615-2131 or 2627
Towson, MD	800-551-9305	410-825-4002 ext. 239, 240 or 241

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Detroit, Michigan)

For Immediate Release

September 21, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
THE SECRETARY OF LABOR
THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Interagency Task Force to Examine the Role
of Medicare and Medicaid Coverage of Assistive
Technologies in Encouraging the Employment of
Persons with Disabilities

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, the last legislation that I signed during the 20th Century, was a breakthrough in helping persons with disabilities enter the workforce. Persons with disabilities can now return to work and retain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage. No longer will they be forced to make an unfair choice between work and essential health care coverage. The Work Incentives law affirms that persons with disabilities can and do make valuable contributions to society through participation in the American workforce.

In ensuring that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to work as all Americans, our next step is to take advantage of the remarkable advances in "assistive technologies" -- the innovative devices that facilitate independent living and meaningful employment for persons with disabilities. This year I have included \$100 million in my budget, an increase of \$14 million over FY 2000, for disability and technology research, including assistive technology research, at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. I have also included in my budget this year \$41 million for State-based assistive technology programs through the Department of Education. The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research, which is overseen by the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, each provide \$30 million in grants for assistive technology research. Together, these funds will support comprehensive research and education on the use of assistive technologies to further integrate persons with disabilities into their community and the workforce.

While the Work Incentives law extended Medicare and Medicaid to workers with disabilities, the Federal Government must make a comprehensive effort to determine how best to make these programs more effective for persons with disabilities, including improved coverage of assistive technologies. It is especially important to examine how medically necessary assistive technologies may facilitate independent living and also support employment for persons with disabilities.

I hereby direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convene an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive Technologies that includes the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and other agencies, as appropriate. The Task Force shall study the role that Medicare and Medicaid does and should play in the coverage of assistive technology devices. The work of the Task Force is intended to provide a framework for future Medicare and Medicaid coverage decisions that complements my Administration's overall efforts to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

I direct the Task Force to conduct a study on the role of Medicare and Medicaid in covering assistive technologies that encourage employment of individuals with disabilities. The study should:

- (a) examine current Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technology devices and the cost of providing such coverage. Assess the current coverage criteria under Medicare and Medicaid with comparisons to the private insurance market. Review and evaluate other past and on-going research on Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies;
- (b) seek input from the disability community to identify the types of medically necessary assistive technologies that facilitate independent living and employment. Develop criteria for identifying such devices;
- (c) determine whether provision of assistive technologies may substitute for other Medicare and Medicaid health care services such as personal care services and, if so, provide an estimate of the potential savings;
- (d) analyze Medicare and Medicaid medical necessity guidelines to determine whether they can support employment while continuing to meet the health care focus of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. As we move toward an increased employment of persons with disabilities there is a need to study the intersection of the concepts of disability, medical necessity, and employment;
- (e) determine an appropriate delineation of responsibility for coverage of assistive technologies between publicly financed health care and employers by evaluating employers' responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Assistive Technology Act; and
- (f) make recommendations for administrative and legislative changes to the Medicare and Medicaid programs, including an estimate of costs, to encourage coverage of medically necessary assistive technologies that also support employment of persons with disabilities.

This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party at law against the United States, its officers or employees, or any other persons.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

Septemebr 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore:
A Record of Leadership in Electronic Government and Technology
September 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have used the power of the Internet to cut red tape and make government more responsive to the needs of citizens. Today, as a result of the President and Vice President's leadership, every Cabinet department has a web site to make information and services available to the American people at the touch of a button. Small businesses can get information on loans, parents can find information about financial aid, and taxpayers can file their taxes and find answers to their questions -- all on government web sites. With the launch of FirstGov, all of the government's online resources will be available and searchable at a single website. This new site builds on the Clinton-Gore Administration's record of leadership in expanding electronic government and fostering the growth of technology. As the first Administration of the Internet Age, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to expand the use of technology in schools, to bridge the digital divide and make technology available for all Americans, to promote electronic commerce, and accelerate research and development that will help create more high-paying jobs in the future.

LEADERSHIP TO CONNECT CHILDREN TO THE FUTURE

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have fought for investments in technology training for teachers, modern computers in the classroom, and high-quality education software. Technology in the classroom can make it easier for parents and teachers to communicate, prepare our children for the high-tech workplace of the 21st century, and help improve student performance in all academic subjects. As a result of the Clinton-Gore educational technology initiative:

-- The overall investment in education technology has increased from \$23 million in 1993 to \$769 million in FY 2000.

-- The number of classrooms connected to the Internet classrooms connected to the Internet has increased from 3 percent in 1993 to 65 percent in 1999.

-- The "E-rate," proposed by the Vice President and passed as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, is providing \$2.25 billion in 20% - 90% discounts to connect schools and libraries to the Internet, with the deepest discounts going to the poorest schools that need it most. Over 647,000 classrooms will be connected to the Internet as a direct result of E-Rate discounts and, in part because of these efforts, 90 percent of the poorest schools now have access to the Internet.

-- Grants supported by the Department of Education are training 400,000 new teachers to use technology effectively in the classroom. The Clinton-Gore Administration's FY 2001 budget proposes doubling last year's investment of \$75 million to ensure that all new teachers entering the workforce are computer literate and can integrate technology into the curriculum.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Currently, 80 percent of households with an income of \$75,000 or above have computers, compared to 16 percent of households earning \$10,000 - \$15,000. In addition to ensuring that all schools and libraries are connected to the Internet, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have also taken other steps to bridge the digital divide and create new opportunity for all Americans:

-- Since 1992, the President and Vice President have tripled funding for Community Technology Centers. The President's FY 2001 budget calls for \$100 million to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers that will expand computer and Internet access in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods.

-- The President and Vice President are supporting innovative applications of information technology for low-income families through the Department of Commerce. Examples include the use of telemedicine for prenatal care, telementoring for at-risk youth, a national computer network for local food banks, and distance learning for people who have lost their jobs.

-- The Administration has challenged the private sector to develop new business models for low-cost computers and Internet access -- to make universal access at home affordable for all Americans.

-- President Clinton successfully mobilized major public and private efforts bridge the digital divide in his April 2000 trip to East Palo Alto, California; Shiprock, New Mexico; Chicago, Illinois; and rural North Carolina. Over 400 companies and non-profit organizations signed a "National Call To Action" to bring digital opportunity to youth, families, and communities. The call to action set goals such as ensuring that every child is technologically literate, and making home access to the Internet as ubiquitous as the telephone.

PROMOTING E-COMMERCE

Electronic commerce is making it easier for small businesses to reach hundreds of millions of customers around the world. For consumers, e-commerce can mean more choice, greater convenience, customized products, and lower prices. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have pursued a policy that allows electronic commerce to flourish by eliminating unnecessary government regulations and relying on private sector leadership whenever possible. The Administration has made significant progress on many of its top e-commerce priorities:

-- President Clinton signed into law the Internet Tax Freedom Act, which created a 3-year moratorium on Internet access taxes and taxes that discriminate against e-commerce and established a commission to look at the long-term tax issues raised by e-commerce.

-- The Clinton-Gore Administration won an agreement in the World Trade Organization to place a temporary moratorium on duties on electronic transmissions -- making cyberspace a "duty-free zone."

-- On June 30, 2000, the President signed the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, which gives online contracts the same force of law as paper contracts. Customers can finalize mortgages, sign insurance contracts, or open brokerage accounts.

-- In October 1998, the President signed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, helping to protect America's intellectual property in cyberspace.

-- The President and Vice President have encouraged the private sector to protect individual privacy through self-regulation, third-party audits and enforcement mechanisms. In just over a year, the number of commercial Internet sites with privacy policies has increased from 15 percent to 66 percent.

-- President Clinton signed the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, which requires commercial Web sites to get a parent's permission before collecting personal information from minors. In May 1999, Vice President Gore announced the Parents' Protection Page, an important new commitment by Internet companies to give parents the resources to protect their children from inappropriate material on the Internet and the knowledge to supervise and guide their children's online activities.

-- The Administration is now working to provide easy access to grant and procurement opportunities. This year, the federal government will award roughly \$300 billion in grants and buy \$200 billion in goods and services. Over the coming year, the Administration will make it possible for people to go online and learn about the vast majority of

these procurements and grant opportunities through a simple process.

ACCELERATING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Today's Internet is an outgrowth of U.S. government-funded research in the late 1960s (the ARPANET). To maintain America's technological edge, it is critical that the government increases investment in long-term research. That's why President Clinton and Vice President Gore have fought for the "Next Generation Internet" - which is connecting universities and national labs at speeds that are 1,000 times faster than today's Internet. The FY 2001 budget invests \$2.3 billion in the Information Technology R&D program, which includes \$89 million for the Next Generation Internet. Every budget the Clinton-Gore Administration has submitted to Congress has increased investments in research and deployment, helping to develop the ideas that will be reflected in productivity growth for decades to come.

CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION ONLINE FIRSTS

- First Vice Presidential Town Hall: The Vice President became the first nationally elected official to participate in a live, electronic town meeting on June 13, 1994.
- First Presidential Webchat: On November 9, 1999, President Clinton took part in the first online chat between a sitting President and citizens of the United States.
- First Electronic Bill Signing: On June 30, 2000, the President signed the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act with a "smart card"
- First Saturday Web Address: On June 24, 2000, President Clinton brought the tradition of the Saturday Presidential Radio Address online when he first announced that within 90 days, citizens would be able to search all on-line resources offered by the federal government from FirstGov.

FIRSTGOV STRENGTHENS AMERICANS' CONNECTION TO GOVERNMENT

Today, exactly 90 days after his Web address announcement, the President is launching FirstGov, a single point-of-entry to one of the largest and most useful collection of web pages in the world. This cutting-edge site will bring government closer to the American people, expanding the reach of democracy and making government more responsive to citizens. The FirstGov website will:

- Make it faster and easier for citizens to locate government information and services, allowing them to access government information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Allow citizens to search for government information by topic, rather than by agency.
- Searches half a billion documents in less than one-quarter of a second.
- Employs strong privacy standards to safeguard citizens' online communications and transactions with the government.

#

Clinton - Gore Administration Accomplishments in Creating
Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities
September 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to ensure that people with disabilities will be full participants in the Information Age. Creating digital opportunity for people with disabilities is particularly important, since it increases their ability to work, gain new skills using online learning, tap in to the rapidly growing universe of electronic information, and improve their quality of life by exchanging e-mail with people with shared interests. Below are just some of the steps that President Clinton and Vice President Gore have taken to help create digital opportunity for Americans with disabilities.

-- Ensuring that the Telecommunications Revolution Benefits All. President Clinton and Vice President Gore fought for the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires that telecommunications equipment and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. In 1999, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules implementing Section 255 of the Telecom Act, which will ensure that people with disabilities have access to telephones, cell phones, pagers, call waiting, and operator services.

-- Ensuring the Federal Government Provides Accessible Technology and Information. In August 1998, the President signed into law the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which included in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. The revised "Section 508" requires that when Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they must ensure that it is accessible to people with disabilities. Because the federal government is a large purchaser of information technology, this law will accelerate the development of accessible technologies.

-- Signing the Assistive Technology Act. With the support of the Clinton-Gore Administration, Congress passed the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (ATA). The ATA supports state efforts such as training, technical assistance, alternative loan programs, demonstration centers, information and referral hotlines, web sites, technology expos, and the development of informational materials.

-- Proposing a More Than Seventeen-Percent Increase in Assistive Technology Initiatives for FY 2001. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$100 million (a \$13.5 million increase) for disability and technology research at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and \$41 million (a \$7 million increase) for Assistive Technology Act funds to States:

- NIDRR would launch a comprehensive technology initiative that includes technical assistance and training to elementary and secondary schools adopt accessible technology for students with disabilities.
- The Administration's request also includes \$15 million to support grants that establish or maintain alternative loan financing programs. Many people with disabilities do not have the private financial resources to purchase the assistive technologies they need. If approved, this increase would significantly enhance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to take advantage of assistive technology.

-- Developing a Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design. In July 2000, President Clinton directed the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) to work with the disability and research communities to identify priority areas for the advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and to publish this information within 120 days. Following

issuance of the report, each major research agency must develop a strategy for enhancing the transfer of technology that can contribute to the needs and requirements identified by the ICDR.

-- Creating the Access America for People with Disabilities Website. On the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the President announced a new website, Access America for People with Disabilities -- www.disAbility.gov -- which will serve as a "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information available throughout the Federal government for people with disabilities and their families.

-- Advancing the state-of-the-art of assistive technology: As part of the Administration's proposed increase for the National Science Foundation, the Administration has proposed increases in R&D that will benefit people with disabilities, such as a "seeing eye" computer that could help people who are blind, or technologies that could automatically turn speech into text for people who are deaf.

###

NEXT STOP ON PRESIDENT CLINTON'S "DIGITAL DIVIDE" TRIP:
DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

September 21, 2000

TODAY, PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL CONTINUE HIS "DIGITAL DIVIDE" TRIP IN FLINT, MICHIGAN, WITH A FOCUS ON CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES: President Clinton will visit Flint, Michigan, as part of his ongoing initiative to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for all Americans. The President will visit a Community Technology Center that will offer access to cutting-edge technology for people with disabilities and other members of the community. He will see demonstrations of advanced technologies such as an "Eyegaze System" that allows people with disabilities to operate a computer and send e-mail using only their eyes; an online physics course that is accessible to people with disabilities; and electronic talking books that are accessible to people with disabilities.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS AS PART OF 5 KEY GOALS TO EMPOWER AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE INFORMATION AGE: At a speech at Mott Community College, the President will announce concrete actions by the Administration, companies, universities and non-profits to help ensure that people with disabilities are full participants in the Information Age by:

1. Increasing the accessibility and usability of existing information and communication products and services for people with disabilities;
2. Improving the state-of-the-art of assistive technology;
3. Ensuring that existing efforts to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity are accessible to people with disabilities;
4. Using information technologies to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and
5. Increasing access to technologies for people with disabilities who cannot currently afford it.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGIES:

Ensuring that information and communications technologies are usable by the 54 million Americans with disabilities is critical, since it can increase their ability to participate in the workforce, allow them to gain new skills using online learning, and improve their quality of life:

- Only 23.9 percent of people with disabilities had access to a computer at home, compared to 51.7 percent of those without disabilities (Department of Education, July 2000)
- Only 31 percent of Americans with so-called "severe" disabilities are working (Census Bureau, June 2000)
- 48 percent of adults with disabilities believe that the Internet has significantly improved their quality of life, compared to just 27 percent of adults without disabilities (Harris Poll, June 2000)

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL ANNOUNCE COMMITMENTS BY GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO CREATE "DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY" FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

- 1 -- CEOs of over 45 high-tech companies -- including AOL, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, and Sun Microsystems -- will pledge to adopt "best practices" on accessibility, such as training their workers to develop accessible products and services, and identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software.
- 2 -- Presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities will agree to expand research and education on accessibility.
- 3 -- SmartForce, an e-learning company, will provide \$20 million worth of free access to its online training material to at least 5,000 people with disabilities per year for the next three years.
- 4 -- President Clinton will create a task force to examine Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technology.
- 5 -- AmeriCorps will provide \$9 million in grants to support 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide, including

projects that help people with disabilities.

-- The President will call on Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and include an "E-Corps" dedicated to bridging the digital divide.

6 -- The Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) will provide over \$16 million in grants to promote the accessible information technology through research and loan programs:

- \$2.5 million, 5-year grant to the Web Accessibility Initiative to help ensure that the Web is accessible to people with disabilities;

- \$7.5 million, 5-year grant to Georgia Tech for a new center on universal design;

- \$3.8 million to expand or create loan programs for assistive technology in six states;

- \$2.8 million, 4-year grant for a University of Kentucky institute to conduct research on assistive technology for children

7 -- The Department of Education will provide \$1.8 million for an initiative by the National Center for Accessible Media and industry to develop standards for accessible online learning.

8 -- The Mott Foundation will help establish a blue-ribbon commission to develop additional policy recommendations for expanding access to assistive technologies.

9 -- Microsoft, Community Options, and other partners will create a New Jersey-based business incubator with an emphasis on the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities.

10 -- Sun Microsystems will create a lab to make free, "open source" desktop software accessible for people with disabilities.

11 -- The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand its High School High Tech program to 4 new cities and 3 new states, including Michigan. This program allows students with disabilities to explore high-tech careers through site visits, mentoring and internships.

12 -- The Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunity Program will award a grant that will help small community-based organizations provide Web-based services to people with disabilities.

-- CompTIA will partner with Compaq and the National Cristina Foundation to provide scholarships and training for certification, with some resources targeted to people with disabilities.

###

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Flint, Michigan)

For Immediate Release

September 21, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICANS
WITH DISABILITIES

Mott Community College
Flint, Michigan

3:15 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am delighted to be here at Mott Community College. And I want to begin by thanking Karla Hudson again for her sterling example, but even more for her commitment to helping other people build a better future for themselves.

I also want to thank my longtime friend and now Cabinet member, Secretary Mineta, for his years and years of commitment to empowering people with disabilities. I thank my National Economic Advisor Gene Sperling, who is a native of Michigan, for the work he did on the announcements I will make today. And, Mayor Stanley, thank you, as always. Judy Brewer, thank you for your work.

I also want to acknowledge Pamela Loving from the Career Alliance, and Michael Zelly from the Disability Network for what they're doing. (Applause.) I'd like to thank Dr. Shaink, the board and the faculty members and the students of Mott Community College for making us welcome here today.

And I'd like to acknowledge a couple of other people who came with me today to be here -- first, the remarkable President of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., Dr. I. King Jordan, and a marathon runner -- congratulations for being here. (Applause.) James Clark, Vice President at NCR; Carla Agosto, the President of the American Foundation for the Blind; and from the administration, Judy Heumann, the Assistant Secretary for Special Education Rehab Services, and Jonathan Young from the White House. They're all around there -- thank you all very much for being here. (Applause.)

I would also like to thank the Vice President in his absence for the work that he has done with me for eight years to empower all Americans.

Looking back, I think this is my fourth trip, Mayor, to Flint. I'm beginning to feel at home -- (applause.) I'm afraid if I come back I'll get a tax bill, I've been here so often. (Laughter.) When I first came here in 1992, Mayor Stanley welcomed me. Now I'm about the leave the presidency, and when I'm gone he'll still be Mayor. (Laughter.) I want to know what the secret is. (Laughter.)

Let me say, as Secretary Mineta said, this is a very fortunate time for our country, and it happened because of a lot of people across America working together. Flint has worked hard, against tough odds, to bring this city back, to prepare for a new century. And you have made a great deal of progress. I am quite sure that the people whom I visited today who are involved with the Disability Network and the Career Alliance and the people at this community college have played a major

role in the resurgence of this fine community.

But we all know that not everyone has shared in the American economic renaissance. We all know there are people and places who have been left behind, including millions of Americans with significant disabilities who want to go to work, but whose path is blocked, and who could work and could contribute, not only to their own lives, but to the rest of us, as well.

The great labor priest, George Higgins, articulated a fundamental truth when he said, "Work is an important way in which we exercise our humanity. In return, society offers us not only our daily bread, but a sense that we, ourselves, are honored for the contributions we make."

When I sought the presidency in 1991 and 1992, my first objective was to give work back to the American people. One of the strongest supporters I had was your former governor, who is here with me today, and my friend of many years, Jim Blanchard, and I thank him for coming. (Applause.) Not only here in communities in Michigan, but in far away New Hampshire, Jim went with me in the snows to listen to people who had lost their livelihoods, who broke down over dinner crying because they were afraid they'd never be able to send their kids to school.

And we have, in large measure, succeeded. But we have not given every American the chance, first, to get an education, and second, to use their education to work and achieve the American Dream. We have an obligation to do it -- an obligation that requires us to keep expanding the circle of opportunity. And in this information age, when the pace of change increasingly accelerates at a breathtaking rate, we cannot achieve that goal if we leave any Americans stranded on the other side of the now famous digital divide. (Applause.)

Now, for nearly eight years now, the Vice President and I have worked to break down barriers that hold people back. One of the most important things we did was to fight hard in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to insist that people with disabilities have full access to telephone equipment and service that most people take for granted. And one of our Federal Communications Commissioners, Susan Ness, is here with me today. I thank her and I thank all of those who helped us to fight for the rights of disabled Americans in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. (Applause.)

In 1998, we pushed through the Work Force Investment Act, requiring that any information technology the federal government buys be accessible to people with disabilities. And in 1999, I was very proud to sign the Work Incentives Improvement Act, which will enable Americans with disabilities to retain their Medicare or Medicaid coverage when they go to work and provide more choices for job training. This will give tens of thousands of Americans the opportunity to be in the work force. (Applause.)

But breaking down barriers is not enough. People actually have to have the tools they need to take advantage of this remarkable moment of opportunity -- especially the tools they need in cyberspace. There are truly amazing new possibilities, as I saw today on my tour.

Through information technologies, a person with a disability such as the great physicist, Stephen Hawking, can continue to be one of the world's top astrophysicist and -- and this is a big "and," because he suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease and is the longest living person, as far as we know, in history with that disease -- and I'm convinced that one of the reasons he is alive today, with the fire in his eyes and the passion burning in his heart, is that he can not only continue to learn, he can continue to communicate what he knows and what he thinks to the rest of the world, thanks to technology. (Applause.)

Millions of other people with disabilities can also access and use the information super highway if we build the necessary on ramps. For example, we're creating a national network of community technology centers so that all Americans, no matter where they live or what their incomes, have easy and affordable access to the Internet.

I visited America's newest community technology center this afternoon, right here in Flint, a partnership between the Department of Education, Mott Community College and the nonprofit Disability Network, focusing on empowering people with disabilities to access the Internet and learn computer skills. I was amazed by a lot of what I saw: technology that translates web pages aloud for people who are blind or visually impaired; provides captioning for deaf and hard of hearing people; enables people with significant physical disabilities to control a computer through eye movement and brain waves. This technology has unbelievable potential.

I have a friend in North Carolina, named Joe Martin, with Lou Gehrig's disease. Years ago, we worked together on education and the economy in the South. Joe Martin then was in great health. He was vigorous, energetic, charismatic, compelling and effective. He's had Lou Gehrig's disease for some time now, and in spite of how great he was then, he is greater today in every way.

Although he can't walk or talk or use his hands, his eyes provide a window on the world. With EyeGaze technology, he can look at a computer screen and type away just using his eyes. He e-mails people here in Flint. With another glance he can activate an electronic voice that reads his words aloud. This astounding technology has enabled him to keep his job as a banker, to talk with his wife and friends and, now, write an about to be published compelling book about his life. (Applause.)

Some of you may have heard of a young swimmer from South Africa, named Terence Parkin. Yesterday, he won the Silver Medal in the mens 200 meter breast stroke, one of the best athletes in the world. He also happens to be deaf, and he can't hear the starting buzzer that used to begin all swimming races. Instead, he can now watch for a personal, yellow starting light, which flashes at his starting block at the same time the buzzer goes off. By installing the simplest of technology -- a little light bulb -- officials gave this determined and gifted athlete his shot at glory. He took it. Now he can celebrate the flash of sunlight off his Silver Medal -- and aren't you glad he got the chance to race. (Applause.)

These kinds of innovations are going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives, especially as we incorporate them into mainstream technology, something Judy emphasized. Here in Genesee County, employers can't find enough people to fill all the technical jobs. Many pay \$20 an hour.

Now, if we want to keep the rest of the economy growing, we have to make information technology more accessible. It's responsible for about 30 percent of the economic growth we've enjoyed over the last eight years. And we have to bring more people into the circle of opportunity to work in information fields. That means people with disabilities have to be able to enter the 21st century work force, not only for your own benefit, but for the rest of America as well. (Applause.)

Today I am honored to announce several major public and private commitments that will move us in the right direction. First, 45 chief executive officers of American high-tech companies have pledged to make their products more accessible to people with disabilities, training their employers to develop new accessible software, hardware and

services.

Second, 25 of our nation's leading research universities have committed to helping us provide equal access to information, including new course work for engineering majors, and new tenure-track faculty positions to address these challenges. That's a big deal, think about it -- major universities giving people tenure to teach how to provide equal access to all Americans without regard to disabilities, to have information-age technology. That's wonderful. (Applause.)

Third -- I'm trying to keep up with all of this. Third, I am pleased to announce that Flint's very own CS Mott Foundation -- and I believe the President of the foundation, Bill White, is here -- will support these goals by funding a blue-ribbon task force, headed by the Disability Network, to figure out how to make this new technology more affordable. It's not enough to develop it if people can't afford it. (Applause.)

Fourth, I'm directing my Cabinet to explore ways of enhancing Medicare and Medicaid to help people with disabilities pay for technologies to enable them to live and work independently in their communities. (Applause.) The Department of Education will provide grants totaling \$4 million to the Web Accessibility Initiative and the National Center for Accessible Media, to help to ensure that people with disabilities can tap into the worldwide web and make the most of on line learning.

And, finally, I am particularly proud to announce that AmeriCorps is awarding \$9 million in grants to put 1,200 volunteers into schools and communities to teach students with disabilities and children from difficult backgrounds the skills they need to take advantage of the Internet. (Applause.)

One project in North Carolina will provide computer training to 300 students who are blind or visually impaired, showing them a whole new horizon of possibilities. And I know, of course, that AmeriCorps volunteers have been active in the disability community here in Flint, and I thank them for their work. And thanks for wearing your t-shirt today. You look good. (Applause.) Thank you.

I've got to get in a little plug for AmeriCorps now. Our legislation reauthorizing AmeriCorps is now pending in the Congress. I have now received a letter signed by 49 of the nation's 50 governors asking Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and other community programs administered by the Corporation for National Service, including the new e-corps program to bridge the digital divide. I hope Congress will take a look at what you've done here and reauthorize AmeriCorps. (Applause.)

Let me just make two points in closing. Once more, bridging the digital divide is not just the morally right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. I remember a decade ago when people were debating the Americans with Disabilities Act, critics said it would be too expensive to make public facilities available to put in curb cuts, handrails, to put those signs in braille up. They were wrong. Since we've torn down those barriers, more than a million Americans with disabilities have entered the work force and we have had the strongest economy America has ever known. It is good to help people live their dreams. (Applause.)

And if we build new on-ramps to the information super highway, people with disabilities will help us build an even stronger America, and, I might add, share in the promise of the declaration of true independence. (Applause.)

The second thing I'd like to say is, this is about way more than

Microsoft
AHS, U.S.

economics. It's important to be able to earn a living. And I want all of you to contribute to America's economic welfare. But it's about more than economics. A century ago, visionaries here in Flint harnessed the potential of new technology to build the world's largest auto company. Their success gave Americans a mobility and freedom that reshaped the entire economic and physical landscape of our nation.

Today, at the dawn of the Information Age, we have the potential to give millions of Americans even greater freedom in cyberspace. As I said, it's about more than economics. You know, when I was driving from my last stop here, there were police along the way at intersections, making sure that no children got in the way of the motorcade or no cars went through the stop sign. One of those police officers was in a wheelchair. (Applause.)

One of my speechwriters has one disabled arm and one prostheses. He writes a heck of a speech. It's nice that he's got a job, but it's more important that the feelings of his heart can be expressed. One of the things I've learned in nearly 30 years in public life and a few years before that, just sort of ambling around the world, is that everybody's got a story. Everybody's got dreams, everybody's afraid sometimes and brave sometimes. And in the end, when you strip it all away, there's not a great deal of difference in the relative significance of our stories. If you put all the people in the world end to end, with the person with the lowest IQ on one end and the highest IQ on the other, you couldn't stick a straw between any two people.

The whole premise of America is that we are inherently, in a fundamental way, equal, though unique. People carry different burdens in life, and everybody, even the most blessed, carry a few. God puts bigger burdens on some than others, but everybody should have the chance to have their story. (Applause.) In the end, in the not completely knowable terrain of the human heart is the real argument for all these efforts.

So I ask you, I'll do everything I can in the time remaining. For the rest of my life I'll be grateful that I happened to be President at this moment of true revolution in human ability. But we have to keep working, and never forget the economics is important, but the dreams matter more.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END 3:37 P.M. EDT

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INITIATIVES TO CREATE
DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
September 21, 2000

-- Leading high-tech CEOs pledge to develop a corporate-wide policy on accessibility: In a letter to President Clinton, the CEOs of leading high-tech companies, including 3Com, Adobe, AOL, AT&T, Bell South, Compaq, eBay, Global Crossing, Handspring, Hewlett-Packard, Macromedia, Microsoft, NCR, PeoplePC, Qualcomm, Red Hat, and Sun Microsystems, have committed to develop a corporate-wide policy on accessibility within six months. Currently, very few high-tech companies have such a policy. These policies will include "best practices" such as:

- Training their workers to develop accessible products and services;
- Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services;
- Identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and
- Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

-- Presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities agree to expand research and education on accessibility: In a letter to President Clinton, the presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities including University of California, University of Michigan, and MIT, have agreed to take a number of important steps to expand research and education on accessibility, including: ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility; expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities. For example, the College of Engineering of the University of Wisconsin will create a new educational program on design and human disability that will involve the creation of additional tenure track faculty positions.

-- SmartForce, an e-learning company, will provide \$20 million worth of free access to its online training material to at least 5,000 people with disabilities: SmartForce will donate \$20 million worth of "e-scholarships" to people with disabilities, working in partnership with the Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology at Western Michigan University. At least 5,000 people per year for the next three years will be able to get free access to on-line training in areas such as information technology and financial management. An online support center will provide e-testing and mentoring during the learning process.

-- President Clinton will direct his Cabinet to create a task force on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technology: President Clinton will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other members of his Cabinet to form an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive Technologies. Currently, the Medicare and Medicaid programs provide essential health coverage to nearly 12 million people with disabilities. The task force will be charged with examining existing Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies, and making recommendations on how to best enhance such coverage in order to support independent living and employment for people with disabilities. This review is particularly important and timely because the historic Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act signed by President Clinton allows people with disabilities to maintain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage even after they return to work.

-- President Clinton will call on Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and will announce that AmeriCorps will today award \$9 million in grants to support 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide, including people with disabilities: AmeriCorps grants will support efforts by 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide.

AmeriCorps volunteers will be helping teachers learn how to use technology, staffing Community Technology Centers, and giving at-risk

youth the skills they need to become technologically literate. Several of the projects focus on the needs of people with disabilities, such as a project in North Carolina that will give 300 blind and visually impaired students of all ages computer and Internet skills. This example of the work that AmeriCorps can do to close the digital divide will be cited by the President as a reason to reauthorize AmeriCorps and include an "E-Corps" component in the reauthorization. E-Corps will encourage the training of AmeriCorps volunteers in computers and technology in communities to help bridge the digital divide.

-- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will invest \$2.5 million to expand partnership with industry to make World Wide Web accessible for people with disabilities: The Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) will provide \$2.5 million in funding over the next 5 years to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative at MIT. This initiative will develop guidelines to ensure that Web content and Web software is accessible for people with disabilities, and will educate developers about the importance of implementing these guidelines. This work is critical because the Web now provides access to over 2 billion pages of information, and is becoming increasingly important in the workplace, for electronic commerce, and for government services.

-- Department of Education will fund new partnership to make online learning accessible to people with disabilities: The Department of Education will provide a \$1.8 million grant under the Administration's Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnership to a new initiative that will help make online learning accessible for people with disabilities. The project will be led by the WGBH National Center for Accessible Media and the IMS Global Learning Consortium. Industry partners include Blackboard, Inc., Educational Testing Service, Pearson Education, Sun Microsystems, PeopleSoft, and Saba Software. The project will impact the accessibility of online resources in all learning environments, including K-12 education, post-secondary education, and workplace training.

-- Department of Education will provide a \$7.5 million grant to the Georgia Institute of Technology to increase the accessibility of electronic and information technology: The Department of Education will provide a 5-year, \$7.5 million grant to the Georgia Institute of Technology's Center for Rehabilitation Technology. This grant will provide training and technical assistance on universal design to technology manufacturers, product designers, and purchasers of information technology. It will also help improve the implementation of federal laws such as Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

-- The C.S. Mott Foundation will fund a "Task Force on Equal Access to Technology and Opportunity. With funding from the Mott Foundation, the Disability Network of Flint, Michigan, will create a one-year blue-ribbon commission that will bring together diverse sectors of society to address long-term challenges in the accessibility of information technologies. First, the Task Force will address the problem of affordability. Many people with disabilities are unable to afford basic computer technology and Internet access, let alone high-end and costly specialized assistive devices. The Task Force will explore financing mechanisms and strategies for building on the foundation of the Tech Act Projects. Second, the Task Force will focus on education and outreach to colleges and universities to help with improve the integration of accessibility and usability into academic curricula and university services. The Task Force will consist of 15-20 members

representing industry, colleges and universities, technology experts, disability advocates, and government. It will meet four times over the coming year, issue a report, and develop model action plans for dissemination to different sectors of society.

-- Microsoft, Community Options, and other public and private partners will create a business incubator - with special emphasis on entrepreneurs with disabilities: Microsoft, Community Options, the New Jersey Community Loan Fund, the New Jersey Technology Council, the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners and other partners will create a business incubator targeted to low-income individuals, with priority given to people with disabilities. The New Jersey-based incubator will provide low-cost office space, customized technology support, and business planning expertise.

-- Sun Microsystems will partner with GNOME Foundation to make open source desktop software accessible for people with disabilities: Sun Microsystems will create a new accessibility lab that will make GNOME software accessible for people with disabilities. Sun is also committed to establishing a fund that will be able to accept contributions from companies and individuals to make open source software accessible for people with disabilities. GNOME is a free, open-source desktop environment that makes it easier for people to use Linux and other similar operating systems. Open source software may be freely distributed and modified by end-users.

-- President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will announce expansion of High School/High Tech program to 4 new cities and 3 new states: The High School/High Tech provides opportunity for students with disabilities to explore exciting careers in science and technology. The program uses site visits, mentoring, shadowing, and paid summer internships to allow students to prepare for careers in scientific, engineering and technology-related fields. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities has identified local partners that will expand High School/High Tech in 4 urban areas (Atlanta, Los Angeles, Orlando, Chicago) and 3 states (Col., Wisc., and Michigan).

-- CompTIA will partner with Compaq and National Cristina Foundation to provide scholarships and training for certification in IT jobs, with some resources targeted to people with disabilities: CompTIA, the Computing Technology Industry Association, will dedicate \$1 million to create scholarships for the general population, including people with disabilities, to provide training for IT service and support positions. Compaq will match this commitment with \$100,000 for scholarships targeted specifically to people with disabilities. In conjunction with these commitments, CompTIA is partnering with the National Cristina Foundation to develop a National Computer Re-Utilization Network to provide training organizations that serve teens, veterans, people with disabilities, and other under-served communities with re-furnished technology.

-- Department of Education will award a \$2 million grant to strengthen Community Technology Centers, make them more accessible for people with disabilities: The Department of Education will award a \$2 million grant to the "America Connects Consortium" to help create, improve and sustain Community Technology Centers through technical assistance. These centers provide access to technology and the skills needed to use it, typically to low-income families that do not have computers and Internet access. One of the consortium partners, the Alliance for Technology Access, will help the centers ensure that they are accessible to people with disabilities and are meeting their needs. The Department of Education is already supporting or expanding 595 CTCs; President Clinton has proposed a \$100 million budget initiative in FY2001 to create an additional 1,000 centers.

-- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will award \$6.6 million in grants to create or expand state loan programs for assistive technology, bridge the digital divide for children: The Department of Education's NIDRR will award \$3.8 million to six states to expand loan programs in 6 states: Virginia, Kansas, Missouri, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Utah. This program will increase the ability of people with disabilities to purchase assistive technology devices and services. NIDRR will also award a 4-year, \$2.8 million grant to create the University of Kentucky Assistive Technology Research Institute to conduct research on assistive technology that has potential to help bridge the digital divide for children with disabilities.

-- NCR will provide free training on benefits of accessibility from a business perspective:
NCR is partnering with IDEAL at NCR and EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information) to create a workshop, "The Global Business Benefits of Designing Accessible and Usable Electronic and Information Technology." This workshop will be offered on-line to 400 participants free of charge.

-- Department of Commerce will help small community-based organizations provide Web-based services to people with disabilities: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Technology Opportunities Program will provide a grant to the Pangea Foundation, based in San Diego, California. The foundation will create Web-based templates that will make it easy for organizations to enter information in a format that is accessible to people with disabilities. People with disabilities will be able to find information on local services through a central clearinghouse on the Web in a format that they can use. The Administration has proposed tripling the budget for the Technology Opportunities Program from \$15 million to \$45 million so that the government can support creative uses of information technology for underserved communities.

-- Center for Applied Special Technology will develop improved version of Web accessibility tool with private sector support: CAST will upgrade its freely available tool for improving the accessibility of Web sites. The new version will have an improved ability to analyze the accessibility of web sites, and the ability to interactively repair problems that are found. Current sponsors include IBM, Microsoft, Mitsubishi Electric Foundation, Sun Microsystems, and HalfthePlanet.com.

-- The Colorado Computer Training Institute will sponsor the first annual Rocky Mountain Accessibility Internet Rally: CCTI will provide training to Web site developers to make them accessible to individuals with hearing, visual, learning or physical impairments. On December 2, web developers from participating companies will unveil those parts of their web sites that have been redesigned. On the same day, web designers will compete to develop accessible web sites for local non-profit groups. This replicated a successful Accessible Internet Rally organized by the Austin-based nonprofit, Knowbility.

###

TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE DISABILITY NETWORK
September 21, 2000

The technologies on display at the Disability Network for the President's visit illustrate both how mainstream technologies can be made accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, as well as how specialized assistive technologies can enable people with various disabilities to take greater advantage of mainstream technologies. Some of the technologies are cross-disability in nature, while others are targeted toward a specific type of disability.

Eye Gaze, LC Technologies. Eye Gaze is a communication and control system for people with complex physical disabilities, such as Lou Gehrig's disease. By looking at control keys displayed on a screen, a person can synthesize speech, control the environment (lights, appliances, etc.), type, operate a telephone, run computer software, and access the Internet and e-mail. As a user sits in front of the Eyegaze monitor, a video camera mounted below the computer observes one of the user's eyes. The Eyegaze software continually analyzes the video image of the eye and determines where the user is looking on the screen. This technology helps illustrate how people with complex and seemingly very limiting disabilities can fully participate in the Information Age. This technology will be demonstrated by Nancy Cleveland of LC Technologies.

Electronic Books (DAISY), American Foundation for the Blind and Time-Warner. Time-Warner Trade Publishing and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) will demonstrate the first commercial title ever to be released to the general reading public using an exciting, new, innovative electronic book technology. Developed in the blindness community, this new publishing technology promises to revolutionize reading and literacy for all people worldwide, including people who are blind or otherwise print disabled. The first publication, Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech, will be demonstrated using both software on a PC and specialized portable reading appliances. Readers can see the text of the book displayed on screen (or in braille) fully synchronized with a narrated recording; use next-generation web technologies to surf directly to any page, chapter, index entry, topic, or subsection in the book; and annotate the text with their own bookmarks and study notes. This technology is an example of how products designed to benefit people with disabilities often have broader applications for the general public, for example, as assistance to people learning English as a Second Language. This technology will be demonstrated by Janina Sajka of the American Federation for the Blind.

Scan-able, Coded Electronic Books, Intacta Technologies. A new application of Intacta.code technology, in partnership with IDEAL (Individuals with Disabilities: Enabling Advocacy Link) at NCR, allows virtually any document or computer file to be converted into compact, printed, 2D codes. When the printed 2D code is run through a standard scanner, the original file is decoded on a PC. The technology can provide persons who are blind and dyslexic electronic access to the audio or electronic version of any printed document, without having to access the original electronic version of the document. A demonstration can show how a purposely damaged and crumpled paper, printed with Intacta.Code, can be run through a scanner rendering a computer-based, screen-readable, version of a 200-page book, "Equality of Opportunity: The Making of the Americans with Disabilities Act." With this technology, a wealth of documents can be stored, for easy retrieval, on a simple piece of paper. This shows how mainstream commercial products can be used to increase access to information for people with disabilities if engineers are sufficiently aware of the needs and potential of people with disabilities. Steve Jacobs of IDEAL at NCR will demonstrate this technology.

JAWS for Windows. Jaws for Windows (JFW) is a screen reader that speaks everything on the computer screen for a person who is blind. It will read everything from web pages and email to Excel spread sheets. The Braille Window works with JFW to provide the user the ability to read the screen in Braille. This gives the user a true representation of the screen and allows for better editing of documents, quicker access to information, and is the only way for a deaf-blind person to access the computer. This illustrates how effective integration of third-party peripherals and mainstream technologies enable people with disabilities to command popular software applications with equal dexterity. Sharon Regal of the Visually Impaired Center in Flint and Luke Zelle of the Disability Network will demonstrate this technology.

Web Accessibility & Accessible Distance Learning, Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) and WGBH's National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM). Accessibility features developed by NCAM and WAI include captioning of audio for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, description of video for people who are blind or who have low vision, and Web design that makes navigation easier for people with physical or cognitive disabilities. These can be applied in the context of entertainment as well as educational materials. For example, NCAM has partnered with MIT to create the MIT PIVOT Project (Physics Interactive Video On-Line Tutor), which makes an introductory physics class accessible on-line by using captions and video descriptions. This demonstration shows how Web sites and distance learning through the Internet can readily be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, including individuals with visual and hearing impairments. Judy Brewer, Director of the Web Accessibility Initiative, will demonstrate this technology.

Additional technologies on display at the Disability Network's Access center will include:

Cyberlink Interface, Brain Actuated Technologies. The Cyberlink Interface enables hands-free control of computers and electrical devices. Brain and body signals detected by the sensors in a headband are amplified, digitized and transmitted to the computer to affect feedback displays, control a mouse or an interactive video game, navigate a productivity or business application, use a web browser, control almost any Windows application, play musical synthesizers or sound cards, activate peripheral devices, and adjust environmental controls.

Video Teleconferencing. Video teleconferencing at the Disability Network, using high-speed Internet connections, will enable users of the Access Center to participate in distance learning opportunities. This would also enable people who are Deaf to communicate over the Internet by using sign language, instead of relying upon a telecommunications relay service.

#

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
September 21, 2000

Access to computers, the Internet, and other information and communications technologies are becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political, and social life. If technology is designed to be usable by people with disabilities, it can increase their ability to participate in the workforce and lead independent lives. Examples of technologies that empower people with disabilities include:

- "Screen readers" for people who are blind;
- Voice recognition for people who cannot readily use a keyboard due to physical disabilities;
- Web sites that follow the guidelines of the Web Accessibility Initiative;
- Captioning of audio and video for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing;
- Video description for people who are blind and visually-impaired; and
- Computers that can be operated by eye movement for people who are unable to speak.

Unfortunately, people with disabilities are often on the wrong side of the "digital divide," as reflected in rates of computer ownership and access to the Internet. When information and communications technologies are not designed to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, isolation from the economic and social mainstream is intensified. The following statistics illustrate the magnitude of the challenge.

There are 54 million Americans with disabilities

- According to 1994-95 Census data, 54 million Americans had some level of disability and 26 million have a disability identified as "severe." [Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, "Americans with Disabilities: 1994-95," August 1997.]

People with disabilities are half as likely to have a computer as people without disabilities

- December 1998 Census data found that 23.9 percent of people with disabilities had access to a computer at home, compared to 51.7 percent of those without disabilities. [Department of Education, Disability Statistics Abstract, "Disability and the Digital Divide," H. Stephen Kaye, July 2000.]

The Internet is more likely to improve the quality of life for adults with disabilities than adults without disabilities

- According to a recent poll, 48 percent of adults with disabilities believe that the Internet has significantly improved their quality of life, compared to just 27 percent of adults without disabilities. People with disabilities report that the Internet allows them to be better informed and more connected to the world around them, and that it puts them in touch with people who have similar interests and experiences. [The Harris Poll #30, "How the Internet is Improving the Lives of Americans With Disabilities," June 7, 2000.]

Only 31 percent of Americans with "severe" disabilities are working

- In 1997, 50.2 percent of the estimated 27.7 million Americans ages 21-64 with disabilities were employed. Of those 17.3 million Americans in this age group with severe disabilities, employment reached only 31.1

percent. Nationally, 78.3 percent of all Americans 21-64 were employed. ["Employment, Earnings, and Disability -- 1991/92, 1993/94, 1994/95 and 1997 Data From the Survey of Income and Program Participation", John M. McNeil, Census Bureau, June 2000.]

Roughly half of those with work disabilities earn less than \$25,000 annually

-- 51.0 percent of households with a disabled family member 15 years old and over, have family incomes of below \$25,000 per year, as compared to only 26.9 percent of households with no disabilities. [Census Bureau, 1997 Data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation.]

#

THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION RECORD
TO HELP CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE
September 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have a strong record of working to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that every child is technologically literate. In 1994, President Clinton and Vice President Gore set the goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet. In 1996, President Clinton unveiled his Technology Literacy Challenge -- and has made a major commitment of resources to connect every classroom to the Internet, expand access to modern, multimedia computers; make high-quality educational software an integral part of the curriculum; and enable teachers to effectively integrate technology into their instruction

President Clinton succeeded in increasing educational technology funding by over 3,000 Percent -- from \$23 million in FY94 to \$766 million in FY2000. This includes:

- \$425 million for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund which helps states and local communities meet all four "pillars" of the President's educational technology initiative (computers, Internet access, teacher training, educational software).

- \$197 million for partnerships between local school districts and the private sector to develop innovative approaches to using technology in the classroom.

- \$75 million to help train all new teachers to use technology.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore also fought for the \$2.25 billion "E-rate" to connect schools and libraries to the Internet.

- The e-rate is providing 20 percent -- 90 percent discounts to connect schools and libraries to the Internet, with the deepest discounts going to the poorest schools that need it most.

- By the end of 2000, the e-rate will have funded \$6.25 billion of telecommunications infrastructure and services to schools and libraries. In 1999, 82 percent of public schools (over 78,000) and 51 percent of public libraries received public funding.

Major progress has been made in reaching the goals of the President's Educational Technology Initiative.

- The number of classrooms connected to the Internet has increased from 3 percent in 1994 to 63 percent in 1999.

- The number of schools connected to the Internet has increased from 35 percent in 1994 to 95 percent in 1999.

- Grants supported by the Department of Education are training 400,000 new teachers to use technology effectively in the classroom.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore are building on their past achievements through a number of new and expanded proposals this year. In February 2000, the President and Vice President announced specific proposals in their FY2001 budget to help create digital opportunity for more Americans, including:

- \$2 billion over 10 years in tax incentives to encourage private sector donation of computers, sponsorship of community technology centers, and technology training for workers.

-- \$150 million to help train all new teachers entering the workforce to use technology effectively.

-- \$100 million to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods.

-- \$50 million for a public/private partnership to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families.

-- \$45 million to promote innovative applications of information and communications technology for under-served communities.

-- \$25 million to accelerate private sector deployment of broadband networks in underserved urban and rural communities.

-- \$10 million to prepare Native Americans for careers in Information Technology and other technical fields.

President Clinton successfully mobilized major public and private efforts bridge the digital divide in his April 2000 trip to East Palo Alto, California; Shiprock, New Mexico; Chicago, Illinois; and Rural North Carolina

-- Over 400 companies and non-profit organizations signed a "National Call To Action" to bring digital opportunity to youth, families, and communities. The call to action set goals such as ensuring that every child is technologically literate, and making home access to the Internet as ubiquitous as the telephone.

-- Companies such as AOL, HP, Qualcomm and Gateway invested over \$100 million in new initiatives to bridge the digital divide.

-- The Kaiser Family Foundation committed to a media campaign to motivate young people to "get connected," with Public Service Announcements starring Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo.

-- The Federal Communications Commission agreed to expand the Lifeline program so that members of Indian tribes could get phone service for as little as \$1 per month.

-- The deans of over 200 hundred colleges of education pledged to meet the President's goal of ensuring that all new teachers will be able to use technology effectively in the classroom, and to benchmark their progress using a self-assessment tool developed by the CEO Forum.

-- Telecommunications companies agreed to provide high-speed Internet access to all businesses and citizens of North Carolina within 3 years.

-- The Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service committed to expand its \$670 million telecommunications loan program to companies that provide high-speed Internet access to rural America.

#

Clinton - Gore Administration Accomplishments in Creating
Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities
September 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to ensure that people with disabilities will be full participants in the Information Age. Creating digital opportunity for people with disabilities is particularly important, since it increases their ability to work, gain new skills using online learning, tap in to the rapidly growing universe of electronic information, and improve their quality of life by exchanging e-mail with people with shared interests. Below are just some of the steps that President Clinton and Vice President Gore have taken to help create digital opportunity for Americans with disabilities.

-- Ensuring that the Telecommunications Revolution Benefits All. President Clinton and Vice President Gore fought for the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires that telecommunications equipment and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. In 1999, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules implementing Section 255 of the Telecom Act, which will ensure that people with disabilities have access to telephones, cell phones, pagers, call waiting, and operator services.

-- Ensuring the Federal Government Provides Accessible Technology and Information. In August 1998, the President signed into law the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which included in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. The revised "Section 508" requires that when Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they must ensure that it is accessible to people with disabilities. Because the federal government is a large purchaser of information technology, this law will accelerate the development of accessible technologies.

-- Signing the Assistive Technology Act. With the support of the Clinton-Gore Administration, Congress passed the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (ATA). The ATA supports state efforts such as training, technical assistance, alternative loan programs, demonstration centers, information and referral hotlines, web sites, technology expos, and the development of informational materials.

-- Proposing a More Than Seventeen-Percent Increase in Assistive Technology Initiatives for FY 2001. The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$100 million (a \$13.5 million increase) for disability and technology research at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and \$41 million (a \$7 million increase) for Assistive Technology Act funds to States:

- NIDRR would launch a comprehensive technology initiative that includes technical assistance and training to elementary and secondary schools adopt accessible technology for students with disabilities.
- The Administration's request also includes \$15 million to support grants that establish or maintain alternative loan financing programs. Many people with disabilities do not have the private financial resources to purchase the assistive technologies they need. If approved, this increase would significantly enhance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to take advantage of assistive technology.

-- Developing a Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design. In July 2000, President Clinton directed the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) to work with the disability and research communities to identify priority areas for the advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and to publish this information within 120 days. Following

issuance of the report, each major research agency must develop a strategy for enhancing the transfer of technology that can contribute to the needs and requirements identified by the ICDR.

-- Creating the Access America for People with Disabilities Website. On the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the President announced a new website, Access America for People with Disabilities -- www.disAbility.gov -- which will serve as a "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information available throughout the Federal government for people with disabilities and their families.

-- Advancing the state-of-the-art of assistive technology: As part of the Administration's proposed increase for the National Science Foundation, the Administration has proposed increases in R&D that will benefit people with disabilities, such as a "seeing eye" computer that could help people who are blind, or technologies that could automatically turn speech into text for people who are deaf.

###

A LIST OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INITIATIVES TO CREATE DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- **Leading high-tech CEOs pledge to develop a corporate-wide policy on accessibility:** In a letter to President Clinton, the CEOs of leading high-tech companies, including 3Com, Adobe, AOL, AT&T, Bell South, Compaq, eBay, Global Crossing, Handspring, Hewlett-Packard, Macromedia, Microsoft, NCR, PeoplePC, Qualcomm, Red Hat, and Sun Microsystems, have committed to develop a corporate-wide policy on accessibility within six months. Currently, very few high-tech companies have such a policy. These policies will include "best practices" such as:
 - Training their workers to develop accessible products and services;
 - Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services;
 - Identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and
 - Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.
- **Presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities agree to expand research and education on accessibility:** In a letter to President Clinton, the presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities including University of California, University of Michigan, and MIT, have agreed to take a number of important steps to expand research and education on accessibility, including: ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility; expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities. For example, the College of Engineering of the University of Wisconsin will create a new educational program on design and human disability that will involve the creation of additional tenure track faculty positions.
- **SmartForce, an e-learning company, will provide \$20 million worth of free access to its online training material to at least 5,000 people with disabilities:** SmartForce will donate \$20 million worth of "e-scholarships" to people with disabilities, working in partnership with the Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology at Western Michigan University. At least 5,000 people per year for the next three years will be able to get free access to on-line training in areas such as information technology and financial management. An online support center will provide e-testing and mentoring during the learning process.
- **President Clinton will direct his Cabinet to create a task force on Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technology:** President Clinton will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other members of his Cabinet to form an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive Technologies. Currently, the Medicare and Medicaid programs provide essential health coverage to nearly 12 million people with disabilities. The task force will be charged with examining existing Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies, and making recommendations on how to best enhance such coverage in order to support independent living and employment for people with disabilities. This review is particularly important and timely because the historic Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act signed by President Clinton allows people with disabilities to maintain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage even after they return to work.
- **President Clinton will call on Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and will announce that AmeriCorps will today award \$9 million in grants to support 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide, including people with disabilities:** AmeriCorps grants will support efforts by 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide. AmeriCorps volunteers will be helping teachers learn how to use technology, staffing Community Technology Centers, and giving at-risk youth the skills they need to become technologically literate. Several of the projects focus on the needs of people with disabilities, such as a project in North Carolina that will give 300 blind and visually impaired students of all ages computer and Internet skills. This example of the work that AmeriCorps can do to

close the digital divide will be cited by the President as a reason to reauthorize AmeriCorps and include an "E-Corps" component in the reauthorization. E-Corps will encourage the training of AmeriCorps volunteers in computers and technology in communities to help bridge the digital divide.

- **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will invest \$2.5 million to expand partnership with industry to make World Wide Web accessible for people with disabilities:** The Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) will provide \$2.5 million in funding over the next 5 years to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative at MIT. This initiative will develop guidelines to ensure that Web content and Web software is accessible for people with disabilities, and will educate developers about the importance of implementing these guidelines. This work is critical because the Web now provides access to over 2 billion pages of information, and is becoming increasingly important in the workplace, for electronic commerce, and for government services.
- **Department of Education will fund new partnership to make online learning accessible to people with disabilities:** The Department of Education will provide a \$1.8 million grant under the Administration's Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnership to a new initiative that will help make online learning accessible for people with disabilities. The project will be led by the WGBH National Center for Accessible Media and the IMS Global Learning Consortium. Industry partners include Blackboard, Inc., Educational Testing Service, Pearson Education, Sun Microsystems, PeopleSoft, and Saba Software. The project will impact the accessibility of online resources in all learning environments, including K-12 education, post-secondary education, and workplace training.
- **Department of Education will provide a \$7.5 million grant to the Georgia Institute of Technology to increase the accessibility of electronic and information technology:** The Department of Education will provide a 5-year, \$7.5 million grant to the Georgia Institute of Technology's Center for Rehabilitation Technology. This grant will provide training and technical assistance on universal design to technology manufacturers, product designers, and purchasers of information technology. It will also help improve the implementation of federal laws such as Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- **The C.S. Mott Foundation will fund a "Task Force on Equal Access to Technology and Opportunity."** With funding from the Mott Foundation, the Disability Network of Flint, Michigan, will create a one-year blue-ribbon commission that will bring together diverse sectors of society to address long-term challenges in the accessibility of information technologies. First, the Task Force will address the problem of affordability. Many people with disabilities are unable to afford basic computer technology and Internet access, let alone high-end and costly specialized assistive devices. The Task Force will explore financing mechanisms and strategies for building on the foundation of the Tech Act Projects. Second, the Task Force will focus on education and outreach to colleges and universities to help with improve the integration of accessibility and usability into academic curricula and university services. The Task Force will consist of 15-20 members representing industry, colleges and universities, technology experts, disability advocates, and government. It will meet four times over the coming year, issue a report, and develop model action plans for dissemination to different sectors of society.
- **Microsoft, Community Options, and other public and private partners will create a business incubator - with special emphasis on entrepreneurs with disabilities:** Microsoft, Community Options, the New Jersey Community Loan Fund, the New Jersey Technology Council, the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners and other partners will create a business incubator targeted to low-income individuals, with priority given to people with disabilities. The New Jersey-based incubator will provide low-cost office space, customized technology support, and business planning expertise.

- **Sun Microsystems will partner with GNOME Foundation to make open source desktop software accessible for people with disabilities:** Sun Microsystems will create a new accessibility lab that will make GNOME software accessible for people with disabilities. Sun is also committed to establishing a fund that will be able to accept contributions from companies and individuals to make open source software accessible for people with disabilities. GNOME is a free, open-source desktop environment that makes it easier for people to use Linux and other similar operating systems. Open source software may be freely distributed and modified by end-users.
- **President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will announce expansion of High School/High Tech program to 4 new cities and 3 new states:** The High School/High Tech provides opportunity for students with disabilities to explore exciting careers in science and technology. The program uses site visits, mentoring, shadowing, and paid summer internships to allow students to prepare for careers in scientific, engineering and technology-related fields. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities has identified local partners that will expand High School/High Tech in 4 urban areas (Atlanta, Los Angeles, Orlando, Chicago) and 3 states (Col., Wisc., and Michigan).
- **CompTIA will partner with Compaq and National Cristina Foundation to provide scholarships and training for certification in IT jobs, with some resources targeted to people with disabilities:** CompTIA, the Computing Technology Industry Association, will dedicate \$1 million to create scholarships for the general population, including people with disabilities, to provide training for IT service and support positions. Compaq will match this commitment with \$100,000 for scholarships targeted specifically to people with disabilities. In conjunction with these commitments, CompTIA is partnering with the National Cristina Foundation to develop a National Computer Re-Utilization Network to provide training organizations that serve teens, veterans, people with disabilities, and other under-served communities with re-furbished technology.
- **Department of Education will award a \$2 million grant to strengthen Community Technology Centers, make them more accessible for people with disabilities:** The Department of Education will award a \$2 million grant to the "America Connects Consortium" to help create, improve and sustain Community Technology Centers through technical assistance. These centers provide access to technology and the skills needed to use it, typically to low-income families that do not have computers and Internet access. One of the consortium partners, the Alliance for Technology Access, will help the centers ensure that they are accessible to people with disabilities and are meeting their needs. The Department of Education is already supporting or expanding 595 CTCs; President Clinton has proposed a \$100 million budget initiative in FY2001 to create an additional 1,000 centers.
- **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will award \$6.6 million in grants to create or expand state loan programs for assistive technology, bridge the digital divide for children:** The Department of Education's NIDRR will award \$3.8 million to six states to expand loan programs in 6 states: Virginia, Kansas, Missouri, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Utah. This program will increase the ability of people with disabilities to purchase assistive technology devices and services. NIDRR will also award a 4-year, \$2.8 million grant to create the University of Kentucky Assistive Technology Research Institute to conduct research on assistive technology that has potential to help bridge the digital divide for children with disabilities.
- **NCR will provide free training on benefits of accessibility from a business perspective:** NCR is partnering with IDEAL at NCR and EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information) to create a workshop, "The Global Business Benefits of Designing Accessible and Usable Electronic and Information Technology." This workshop will be offered on-line to 400 participants free of charge.

- **Department of Commerce will help small community-based organizations provide Web-based services to people with disabilities:** The National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Technology Opportunities Program will provide a grant to the Pangea Foundation, based in San Diego, California. The foundation will create Web-based templates that will make it easy for organizations to enter information in a format that is accessible to people with disabilities. People with disabilities will be able to find information on local services through a central clearinghouse on the Web in a format that they can use. The Administration has proposed tripling the budget for the Technology Opportunities Program from \$15 million to \$45 million so that the government can support creative uses of information technology for underserved communities.
- **Center for Applied Special Technology will develop improved version of Web accessibility tool with private sector support:** CAST will upgrade its freely available tool for improving the accessibility of Web sites. The new version will have an improved ability to analyze the accessibility of web sites, and the ability to interactively repair problems that are found. Current sponsors include IBM, Microsoft, Mitsubishi Electric Foundation, Sun Microsystems, and HalfthePlanet.com.
- **The Colorado Computer Training Institute will sponsor the first annual Rocky Mountain Accessibility Internet Rally:** CCTI will provide training to Web site developers to make them accessible to individuals with hearing, visual, learning or physical impairments. On December 2, web developers from participating companies will unveil those parts of their web sites that have been redesigned. On the same day, web designers will compete to develop accessible web sites for local non-profit groups. This replicated a successful Accessible Internet Rally organized by the Austin-based nonprofit, Knowbility.

**Clinton – Gore Administration Accomplishments in Creating
Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities
September 21, 2000**

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to ensure that people with disabilities will be full participants in the Information Age. Creating digital opportunity for people with disabilities is particularly important, since it increases their ability to work, gain new skills using online learning, tap in to the rapidly growing universe of electronic information, and improve their quality of life by exchanging e-mail with people with shared interests. Below are just some of the steps that President Clinton and Vice President Gore have taken to help create digital opportunity for Americans with disabilities.

- **Ensuring that the Telecommunications Revolution Benefits All.** President Clinton and Vice President Gore fought for the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires that telecommunications equipment and services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. In 1999, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules implementing Section 255 of the Telecom Act, which will ensure that people with disabilities have access to telephones, cell phones, pagers, call waiting, and operator services.
- **Ensuring the Federal Government Provides Accessible Technology and Information.** In August 1998, the President signed into law the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which included in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. The revised "Section 508" requires that when Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they must ensure that it is accessible to people with disabilities. Because the federal government is a large purchaser of information technology, this law will accelerate the development of accessible technologies.
- **Signing the Assistive Technology Act.** With the support of the Clinton-Gore Administration, Congress passed the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (ATA). The ATA supports state efforts such as training, technical assistance, alternative loan programs, demonstration centers, information and referral hotlines, web sites, technology expos, and the development of informational materials.
- **Proposing a More Than Seventeen-Percent Increase in Assistive Technology Initiatives for FY 2001.** The Administration's FY 2001 budget includes \$100 million (a \$13.5 million increase) for disability and technology research at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and \$41 million (a \$7 million increase) for Assistive Technology Act funds to States:
 - NIDRR would launch a comprehensive technology initiative that includes technical assistance and training to elementary and secondary schools adopt accessible technology for students with disabilities.
 - The Administration's request also includes \$15 million to support grants that establish or maintain alternative loan financing programs. Many people with disabilities do not have the private financial resources to purchase the assistive technologies they need. If approved, this increase would significantly enhance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to take advantage of assistive technology.
- **Developing a Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design.** In July 2000, President Clinton directed the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) to work with the disability and research communities to identify priority areas for the advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and to publish this information within 120 days. Following issuance of the report, each major research agency must develop a strategy for enhancing the transfer of technology that can contribute to the needs and requirements identified by the ICDR.
- **Creating the Access America for People with Disabilities Website.** On the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the President announced a new website, Access America for People with Disabilities -- www.disAbility.gov -- which will serve as a "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information available throughout the Federal government for people with disabilities and their families.
- **Advancing the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** As part of the Administration's proposed increase for the National Science Foundation, the Administration has proposed increases in R&D that will benefit people with disabilities, such as a "seeing eye" computer that could help people who are blind, or technologies that could automatically turn speech into text for people who are deaf.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Access to computers, the Internet, and other information and communications technologies are becoming increasingly important for full participation in America's economic, political, and social life. If technology is designed to be usable by people with disabilities, it can increase their ability to participate in the workforce and lead independent lives. Examples of technologies that empower people with disabilities include:

- "Screen readers" for people who are blind;
- Voice recognition for people who cannot readily use a keyboard due to physical disabilities;
- Web sites that follow the guidelines of the Web Accessibility Initiative;
- Captioning of audio and video for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing;
- Video description for people who are blind and visually-impaired; and
- Computers that can be operated by eye movement for people who are unable to speak.

Unfortunately, people with disabilities are often on the wrong side of the "digital divide," as reflected in rates of computer ownership and access to the Internet. When information and communications technologies are not designed to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, isolation from the economic and social mainstream is intensified. The following statistics illustrate the magnitude of the challenge.

There are 54 million Americans with disabilities

- According to 1994-95 Census data, 54 million Americans had some level of disability and 26 million have a disability identified as "severe." [Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, "Americans with Disabilities: 1994-95," August 1997.]

People with disabilities are half as likely to have a computer as people without disabilities

- December 1998 Census data found that 23.9 percent of people with disabilities had access to a computer at home, compared to 51.7 percent of those without disabilities. [Department of Education, Disability Statistics Abstract, "Disability and the Digital Divide," H. Stephen Kaye, July 2000.]

The Internet is more likely to improve the quality of life for adults with disabilities than adults without disabilities

- According to a recent poll, 48 percent of adults with disabilities believe that the Internet has significantly improved their quality of life, compared to just 27 percent of adults without disabilities. People with disabilities report that the Internet allows them to be better informed and more connected to the world around them, and that it puts them in touch with people who have similar interests and experiences. [The Harris Poll #30, "How the Internet is Improving the Lives of Americans With Disabilities," June 7, 2000.]

Only 31 percent of Americans with "severe" disabilities are working

- In 1997, 50.2 percent of the estimated 27.7 million Americans ages 21-64 with disabilities were employed. Of those 17.3 million Americans in this age group with severe disabilities, employment reached only 31.1 percent. Nationally, 78.3 percent of all Americans 21-64 were employed. ["Employment, Earnings, and Disability – 1991/92, 1993/94, 1994/95 and 1997 Data From the Survey of Income and Program Participation", John M. McNeil, Census Bureau, June 2000.]

Roughly half of those with work disabilities earn less than \$25,000 annually

- 51.0 percent of households with a disabled family member 15 years old and over, have family incomes of below \$25,000 per year, as compared to only 26.9 percent of households with no disabilities. [Census Bureau, 1997 Data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation.]

THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION RECORD TO HELP CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

September 21, 2000

President Clinton and Vice President Gore have a strong record of working to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that every child is technologically literate. In 1994, President Clinton and Vice President Gore set the goal of connecting every classroom and library to the Internet. In 1996, President Clinton unveiled his Technology Literacy Challenge -- and has made a major commitment of resources to connect every classroom to the Internet, expand access to modern, multimedia computers; make high-quality educational software an integral part of the curriculum; and enable teachers to effectively integrate technology into their instruction

President Clinton succeeded in increasing educational technology funding by over 3,000 Percent -- from \$23 million in FY94 to \$766 million in FY2000. This includes:

- \$425 million for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund which helps states and local communities meet all four "pillars" of the President's educational technology initiative (computers, Internet access, teacher training, educational software).
- \$197 million for partnerships between local school districts and the private sector to develop innovative approaches to using technology in the classroom.
- \$75 million to help train all new teachers to use technology.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore also fought for the \$2.25 billion "E-rate" to connect schools and libraries to the Internet.

- The e-rate is providing 20 percent – 90 percent discounts to connect schools and libraries to the Internet, with the deepest discounts going to the poorest schools that need it most.
- By the end of 2000, the e-rate will have funded \$6.25 billion of telecommunications infrastructure and services to schools and libraries. In 1999, 82 percent of public schools (over 78,000) and 51 percent of public libraries received public funding.

Major progress has been made in reaching the goals of the President's Educational Technology Initiative.

- The number of classrooms connected to the Internet has increased from 3 percent in 1994 to 63 percent in 1999.
- The number of schools connected to the Internet has increased from 35 percent in 1994 to 95 percent in 1999.
- Grants supported by the Department of Education are training 400,000 new teachers to use technology effectively in the classroom.

President Clinton and Vice President Gore are building on their past achievements through a number of new and expanded proposals this year. In February 2000, the President and Vice President announced specific proposals in their FY2001 budget to help create digital opportunity for more Americans, including:

- \$2 billion over 10 years in tax incentives to encourage private sector donation of computers, sponsorship of community technology centers, and technology training for workers.
- \$150 million to help train all new teachers entering the workforce to use technology effectively.

- \$100 million to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods.
- \$50 million for a public/private partnership to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families.
- \$45 million to promote innovative applications of information and communications technology for underserved communities.
- \$25 million to accelerate private sector deployment of broadband networks in underserved urban and rural communities.
- \$10 million to prepare Native Americans for careers in Information Technology and other technical fields.

President Clinton successfully mobilized major public and private efforts bridge the digital divide in his April 2000 trip to East Palo Alto, California; Shiprock, New Mexico; Chicago, Illinois; and Rural North Carolina

- Over 400 companies and non-profit organizations signed a "National Call To Action" to bring digital opportunity to youth, families, and communities. The call to action set goals such as ensuring that every child is technologically literate, and making home access to the Internet as ubiquitous as the telephone.
- Companies such as AOL, HP, Qualcomm and Gateway invested over \$100 million in new initiatives to bridge the digital divide.
- The Kaiser Family Foundation committed to a media campaign to motivate young people to "get connected," with Public Service Announcements starring Magic Johnson and Rebecca Lobo.
- The Federal Communications Commission agreed to expand the Lifeline program so that members of Indian tribes could get phone service for as little as \$1 per month.
- The deans of over 200 hundred colleges of education pledged to meet the President's goal of ensuring that all new teachers will be able to use technology effectively in the classroom, and to benchmark their progress using a self-assessment tool developed by the CEO Forum.
- Telecommunications companies agreed to provide high-speed Internet access to all businesses and citizens of North Carolina within 3 years.
- The Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service committed to expand its \$670 million telecommunications loan program to companies that provide high-speed Internet access to rural America.

NEXT STOP ON PRESIDENT CLINTON'S "DIGITAL DIVIDE" TRIP: DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

September 21, 2000

TODAY, PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL CONTINUE HIS "DIGITAL DIVIDE" TRIP IN FLINT MICHIGAN, WITH A FOCUS ON CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES: President Clinton will visit Flint, Michigan as part of his ongoing initiative to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for all Americans. The President will visit a Community Technology Center that will offer access to cutting-edge technology for people with disabilities and other members of the community. He will see demonstrations of advanced technologies such as an "Eyegaze System" that allows people with disabilities to operate a computer and send e-mail using only their eyes, and an online physics course that is accessible to people with disabilities, and electronic talking books that are accessible to people with disabilities.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS AS PART OF 5 KEY GOALS TO EMPOWER AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE INFORMATION AGE: At a speech at Mott Community College, the President will announce concrete actions by the Administration, companies, universities and non-profits to help ensure that people with disabilities are full participants in the Information Age by:

1. Increasing the accessibility and usability of existing information and communication products and services for people with disabilities;
2. Improving the state-of-the-art of assistive technology;
3. Ensuring that existing efforts to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity are accessible to people with disabilities;
4. Using information technologies to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and
5. Increasing access to technologies for people with disabilities who cannot currently afford it.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGIES:

Ensuring that information and communications technologies are usable by the 54 million Americans with disabilities is critical, since it can increase their ability to participate in the workforce, allow them to gain new skills using online learning, and improve their quality of life:

- Only 23.9 percent of people with disabilities had access to a computer at home, compared to 51.7 percent of those without disabilities (Department of Education, July 2000)
- Only 31 percent of Americans with so-called "severe" disabilities are working (Census Bureau, June 2000)
- 48 percent of adults with disabilities believe that the Internet has significantly improved their quality of life, compared to just 27 percent of adults without disabilities (Harris Poll, June 2000)

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL ANNOUNCE COMMITMENTS BY GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO CREATE "DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY" FOR AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

- Over 45 high-tech CEOs will pledge to adopt "best practices" on accessibility, such as training their workers to develop accessible products and services, and identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software.
- Presidents of 25 of the nation's top research universities will agree to expand research and education on accessibility.
- SmartForce, an e-learning company, will provide \$20 million worth of free access to its online training material to at least 5,000 people with disabilities per year for the next three years.
- President Clinton will create a task force to examine Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technology.
- Americorps will provide \$9 million in grants to support 1,200 AmeriCorps volunteers to help close the digital divide, including projects that help people with disabilities.
- The President will call on Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and include an "E-Corps" dedicated to bridging the digital divide.
- The Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) will provide over \$16 million in grants to promote the accessible information technology through research and loan programs:
 - \$2.5 million, 5-year grant to the Web Accessibility Initiative to help ensure that the Web is accessible to people with disabilities;
 - \$7.5 million, 5-year grant to Georgia Tech for a new center on universal design;
 - \$3.8 million to expand or create loan programs for assistive technology in six states;
 - \$2.8 million, 4-year grant for a University of Kentucky institute to conduct research on assistive technology for children

- The Department of Education will provide \$1.8 million for an initiative by the National Center for Accessible Media and industry to develop standards for accessible online learning.
- The Mott Foundation will help establish a blue-ribbon commission to develop additional policy recommendations for expanding access to assistive technologies.
- Microsoft, Community Options, and other partners will create a New Jersey-based business incubator with an emphasis on the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities.
- Sun Microsystems will create a lab to make free, "open source" desktop software accessible for people with disabilities.
- The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand their High School High Tech program to 4 new cities and 3 new states, including Michigan. This program allows students with disabilities to explore high-tech careers through site visits, mentoring and internships.
- The Department of Commerce's Technology Opportunity Program will award a grant that will help small community-based organizations provide Web-based services to people with disabilities.
- CompTIA will partner with Compaq and the National Cristina Foundation to provide scholarships and training for certification, with some resources targeted to people with disabilities.

Last Updated: September 4

Summary of Potential Deliverables

write up of what WZW can do

High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy: Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. High-tech CEOs would commit to implement "best practices" such as: Training their workers to develop accessible products and services; Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services; Identifying and fixing accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and, Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

- STATUS: Several CEOs have already "signed" on to the letter; working with associations and individual companies to secure additional commitments. *ITAA*

University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:

Presidents of the leading research universities would commit to: Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility; Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and, Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Several Presidents have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments. *15 Univ.*

Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities: Employers would agree to: Targeting disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals; Making assistive technology available to their employees; and, Promoting the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.

- STATUS: Several have already "signed" on to the letter; working to secure additional commitments. *WZW partnership? Able to work - produce the letters*

harder proposal
Commission on Assistive Technology: We would announce that foundations are supporting a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disability community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas, such as financing assistive technology for people who may not be able to afford it and working with colleges and universities to improve education and outreach about accessible technology.

- STATUS: Equal Access to Software and Information (EASI) will likely be the "home" of this commission. *today or tomorrow* ~~Norm Coombs and Larry Scadden~~ are working to develop the focus of the commission. We are working to identify possible members. Several foundations have indicated an interest in financially supporting the commission.

Making educational content accessible: The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready

More 1-12 companies involved.

→ it's out for review

Making the Web accessible: The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: Ready?

Curtis Richards

Education and outreach about benefits of accessible design. NCR is partnering with IDEAL at NCR and EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information) to create a workshop, "The Global Business Benefits of Designing Accessible and Usable Electronic and Information Technology," offered on-line to 400 participants free of charge (i.e. educators and industry experts).

- STATUS: Ready

Support of computer labs in minority schools of Atlanta. NCR, in partnership with the Alliance of Black NCR Employees, will provide roughly 100 PCs to continue its efforts to setup computer labs in the Atlanta City School district.

- STATUS: Ready, but as proposed doesn't have a direct connection to people with disabilities (part of an existing initiative), but there may be a way the proposal could be designed to help meet the needs of minority students with disabilities.

Supporting New Jersey Entrepreneurs with disabilities. Microsoft, Community Options, the New Jersey Community Loan Fund, the New Jersey Technology Council, the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners and other public and private sector partners in New Jersey, are preparing to announce the establishment of the first-in-the-nation business incubator targeted to low income individuals including, as a priority, those with disabilities. It will provide low-cost office space, customized technology support, business planning expertise, and other support services to entrepreneurs with and without disabilities.

- STATUS: The 14,000 square-foot facility has not yet opened, but could be ready within a few weeks. Waiting on additional information from Community Options

Financial Lending Opportunities for People with Disabilities. Microsoft, Business Loan Center, Inc (BLC) one of the nation's leading SBA guaranteed lenders, the National Cooperative Bank Development Corporation (NCBDC), and Community Options, Inc. are sponsoring the first nationwide community developer and financial lending institution targeted exclusively to the advancement of the social and economic independence of Americans with disabilities. The Abilities Fund will help start, strengthen or grow small businesses to be owned by Americans with disabilities nationwide.

- STATUS:

Expanding Employment in IT Careers through PASS IT ON. Microsoft, the Information Technology Association of America, and Community Options plan to expand to several new states the highly successful PASS IT ON program which trains individuals with disabilities to be placed with IT companies as web developers, network administrators, programmers, and customer support specialists.

- STATUS:

TX, CO, NJ, VA

Helping NGOs and corporations with implementing digital divide initiatives. The Narragansett Group (based in TX) is dedicated to aiding other groups in meeting their missions. It has offered \$100,000 in in-kind contributions of management, marketing, and public affairs assistance to support increased digital opportunities for people with disabilities.

- STATUS: We have the offer in writing, but it's unclear how this would exactly fit into the initiative.

Developing academic programs to further accessible design research. The College of Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has made a commitment to create a new educational program within the College of Engineering on design and human disability, with emphasis on Universal Design of electronic and information technologies. This commitment includes transfer of existing faculty FTE and the addition of two new tenure track positions.

- STATUS: Ready

Providing Internet and other communications capabilities to people with disabilities.

TeleServices International Grouping in partnership with UCP has offered to provide free internet access for life, including email, fax, voicemail, and integrated messaging for people with disabilities (not necessarily restricted). This would also include distribution outreach and on-going customer service, and is estimated at \$250 per person per year. The business model is based on bringing people to an internet portal, presumably sustained with advertising.

- STATUS: TSIG and UCP are ready to launch this effort, and welcomes input from the White House.

Creation of Disability Business Development Board. DOL has proposed a presidentially-appointed nine-member Board of CEOs to promote public-private partnerships to increase employment of people with disabilities.

- STATUS: DOL has drafted an E.O. to create the Board. It's unclear how this might interact with an expanded mission of the Welfare to Work Partnership focusing on employment of people with disabilities.

Training people with disabilities for IT jobs. DOL proposes a partnership with the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) and CompTIA (the Computer Technology Industry Association) to provide IT related training for people with disabilities, coupled with seeking funding from the H1-B program to support grants to pilot projects in sites across the country.

- STATUS: *from files*

Tailoring government information according to locality. DOL's www.disability.gov web site will utilize new technologies to seamlessly and "invisibly" deliver government information tailored to individuals' geographic location. This will support, for example, people with disabilities in finding local employment opportunities.

- STATUS:

Increasing High-tech opportunities for high school students with disabilities. The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand its High

School/High Tech program to several new cities and states. These programs provide high school students with internships and other experiences with are high-tech businesses and government agencies.

- STATUS: Wisconsin and Colorado are ready for announcement. West Virginia, Michigan, and New York are in progress. Atlanta, Los Angeles, Orlando, and Chicago are ready for announcement. New York City is in progress.

Supporting Assistive Technology Act projects. An Amendment to the Labor/HHS appropriations bill includes an amendment that would guarantee continued funding for the state tech act projects, some of which could lose their funding as early as 2001. The conference agreement did not include the Senate amendment.

- STATUS:

Webcasting of Digital Divide Trip. IDEAL at NCR has proposed providing web casting for elements of the President's trip, perhaps including closed-captioning and description. This could result in a product that could be used in future settings, i.e. classroom instruction.

- STATUS: Ready to be put in place if desired.

HHS EM to cover assistive
tech

Draft September 14, 2000

Background for September 21st trip - Creating Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities

I. MESSAGE: With the right commitments from government and the private sector, information technology can be a powerful tool for improving the quality of life and expanding employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

II. GOALS: In cooperation with the disability community, the Administration has developed the following 5 goals that will help bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for Americans with disabilities:

1. **Existing IT products and services should be designed from the beginning to be more accessible for people with disabilities:** Currently, not all IT products and services are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, someone who is blind can't use the Web if a Web page uses graphics without also including text.
2. **We should improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** Through research and development, we can make it even easier for people to use IT - through technologies such as voice recognition for people who can't use a keyboard.
3. **Employers should take advantage of IT to expand employment for people with disabilities:** The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is much higher than the general population. Accessible IT could make it easier for employers to hire people with disabilities and allow more people with disabilities to work from their home.
4. **Our existing "digital divide" initiatives should be designed so that people with disabilities can take advantage of them:** For example, our national network of Community Technology Centers should be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities.
5. **We should address inequities in access to assistive technology:** There are amazing technologies (e.g., people who are paralyzed can operate computers through the use of eye-gaze or brain waves) that are simply too expensive for low or moderate-income households.

III. PROPOSED SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

1. **President sees demonstration of technology that is accessible to people with disabilities**
(30 minutes)

Recommended Location: Disability Network/Technology Access Center

Examples of technology:

- An “eye-gaze” system that enables people without motor function or speech to operate a computer and use the Internet, solely through the movement of their eyes.
- Electronic books that allow people who are blind to have access to a universe of knowledge.
- Voice recognition systems that allow people who can't use a keyboard to use computers.
- An online MIT physics course that has been designed to be accessible for people with all types disabilities, through the use of captioning and descriptive video.

2. **President conducts roundtable discussion with CEOs, disability community representatives, technology experts, elected officials (45 minutes - 1 hr)**

Recommended Location: Disability Network or Career Alliance

Possible Topics:

- Why accessible IT matters to people with disabilities
- Role of companies, government and universities in making IT accessible
- Strategies to increase employment of people with disabilities
- Improving affordability of technology

3. **Speaking program (30 minutes)**

Recommended Location: Career Alliance

Possible Program:

- Someone from technology community (e.g. Tim Berners-Lee, Inventor of World Wide Web)
- Someone with a disability who can talk about the impact of technology
- President gives speech -- announces deliverables

IV. BACKGROUND ON SITES

Technology Access Center:

- Provides access to computers and assistive technology for people with disabilities and others in the community
- Has the "latest and greatest" assistive technology -- eyegaze, screen reader software, voice recognition
- Linked to the Mott Community College for distance learning through the Internet and video-conferencing
- Plans to offer a certification program for experts in assistive technology.
- This center is located at a Center for Independent Living called the Disability Network, which is staffed by people with disabilities, including Americorps volunteers with disabilities

Career Alliance One-Stop Service Center:

- "One-Stop" center for workforce development created under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 -- a major accomplishment of the Clinton Administration.
- A person with a disability serves as the Chairman of the local Workforce Investment Board, as well as the Chairman of the association of all Michigan Workforce Investment Boards (he's also the Director of the Disability Network independent living center.)
- Service Center is fully accessible and has state-of-the-art technology.
- Workforce Investment Board has created a Disability Council to increase employment with disabilities.
- Workforce Investment Board is working to implement the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999.

IV. EXAMPLES OF DELIVERABLES

Private sector

1. **High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy:** Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. A number of high-tech CEOs (HP, Compaq, AOL, eBay, Bell South, Adobe, Applied Materials, etc.) have committed to implement "best practices" such as:

- Training their workers to develop accessible products and services;
- Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services;
- Identify and fix accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and
- Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

2. **University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:**

Presidents of a number of leading research universities have committed to:

15-20

- Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility;
- Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and
- Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

3. **Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities:** Employers would agree to:

- Target disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals;
- Make assistive technology available to their employees; and
- Promote the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.

[Note: We do not have a critical mass of employers on this letter yet.]

4. **Commission on Assistive Technology:** The Mott Foundation, based in Flint, has agreed to support a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disability community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas on assistive technology. The host of the commission will be the Disability Network in Flint.

Government

1. **Making the Web accessible:** The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities called the Web Accessibility Initiative.
2. **Making educational content and distance learning accessible:** The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.

- in advance depends when its done*
3. **Ensuring that our Community Technology Centers are accessible for people with disabilities:** The Department of Education will give a grant called the "America Connects Consortium" to provide technical assistance to our community technology centers. As part of this grant, CTCs will be given technical assistance on how to ensure that they are accessible for people with disabilities. *\$7.5M?*
 4. **Executive Memorandum on Assistive Technology:** This Executive Memorandum directs HHS and other relevant agencies to create a task force on the issue of Medicare and Medicaid coverage on assistive technology.
 5. **Increasing high-tech employment for people with disabilities:** The Department of Labor is considering targeting some of their "H1-B" money to increase high-tech training for people with disabilities. [Note: No final decision has been made on this.]
 6. **Expanding the High-School/High-Tech program:** The President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities will expand its High School/High Tech program to several new cities and states. These programs provide high-school students with disabilities internships and other experiences in high-tech businesses.
- done*

V. PAPER

- 1-page summary/overview
- Detailed description of deliverables
- 1-page on background, why this is important
- 1-page on Clinton record *on assisted technology*
↳ Dig. Divide, disabilities

*ANNOUNCE - city tomorrow
location Mon.*

*UNIVERSITY PIECE IN ADV. (Wed - local/nat'l)
USA Today*

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Fayetteville, Arkansas)

For Immediate Release

July 25, 2000

July 25, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive
Technology and Universal Design

It is my Administration's policy to accelerate the development and deployment of assistive technology and technology that promotes universal design. Assistive technology maintains or improves the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Universal design is the design of products and environments that enables all people to use these products, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Assistive technologies and products that incorporate universal design principles can significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and increase their ability to participate in the workplace.

Therefore, to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, I direct as follows: (a) The Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) shall, within 120 days from the date of this directive, publish a report identifying priority areas for the advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities. This report should be prepared in cooperation with the disability and the research communities. The report should cover technologies needed for improving or increasing:

- Sensory functioning, such as digital technologies to enhance speech intelligibility;
- Mobility enhancement, such as advanced prosthetic devices;
- Manipulation ability;
- Cognitive function;
- Accessibility of information and communications technology, such as text-to-speech and speech recognition systems; and
- Accessibility to, and mobility within, the physical environment.

(b) Following the issuance of this report, each agency that participates in the Small Business Innovation Research program (SBIR) shall, consistent with current law, develop a strategy for enhancing the transfer of technology that can contribute to the needs and requirements identified by the ICDR. This strategy must address both intramural and extramural research and development. Agencies shall publish their strategies 6 months after the issuance of the ICDR report. Agency strategies should include, but not be limited to, the development of focused solicitations under the SBIR program.

This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law, by a party against the United States, its officers, its employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

#

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, July 25, 2000

Contact: James E. Kennedy
(202) 456-7035

**VICE PRESIDENT GORE ANNOUNCES NEW MEASURES PROMOTING HOME AND
COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES AND HOUSING OPTIONS
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Commemorates the 10th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act**

Today, in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Vice President Gore announced that the Clinton-Gore Administration will launch a series of major new initiatives designed to promote the delivery of home and community-based services and support for people with disabilities.

The initiatives include a new \$50 million investment in FY 2001 to help states more easily offer services to people with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs; new guidance to state Medicaid directors on Medicaid coverage of home and community based services to help them comply with the recent Olmstead Supreme Court ruling; and a new public-private partnership between the Administration and the National Program Office on Self-Determination to help individuals with disabilities in institutions transition into community-based settings. In addition, the Vice President also announced new plans to increase home ownership; extend work incentives for individuals with disabilities to a broader range of housing assistance programs; and promote the development of new assistive technology for people with disabilities. Finally, the Vice President emphasized the Administration's strong support for health care and work incentives legislation of particular importance to people with disabilities, including a Medicare prescription drug benefit, a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights; a \$1,000 tax credit for work-related expenses for people with disabilities and a \$3,000 long term care tax credit for Americans with long-term care needs.

"I am proud of the progress we have made at turning the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act into reality," Vice President Gore said. "I can think of no better way to build on our progress and celebrate this day than by taking steps towards assuring that Americans with disabilities have the opportunity to live and work in their communities if they so choose."

Today, the Vice President will announce new measures to:

Enhance State Capacity to Provide Home and Community-Based Services. Declaring that, "no one should have to live in an institution or nursing home if they prefer to live in the community with the right support," the Vice President announced a \$50 million investment by the Administration in FY 2001 to help states develop comprehensive plans to provide services to persons with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. These new grants, proposed today, will be funded from the previously unspecified portion of the health care quality assurance fund announced in this year's midsession review and are identical to those included in the Medicaid Community Attendant Services and Supports Act of 1999. As a condition of receiving funds, states would actively involve people with disabilities and their families in the development of programs enabling people with disabilities to choose where they want to live and receive services. These funds would be used to:

- Conduct intensive outreach efforts to educate people with disabilities about the home and community-based options currently available to them;
- Enhance inter-agency coordination and single point of entry activities; and
- Identify, develop, and implement strategies to modify state policies that result in the unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities rather than the provision of home and community-based services, and implement other system change activities.

Release New Guidance to States on Home and Community-Based Medicaid Coverage Rules

Following the Olmstead Supreme Court Decision. Today, the Vice President announced new guidance to states on their responsibilities in the Medicaid program to support the implementation of the Olmstead Supreme Court decision. States and disability advocates have confirmed that the lack of guidance is undermining their ability to rapidly initiate and provide access to essential home and community-based services necessary to be in compliance with Olmstead. It clarifies existing options to: assist people with disabilities in making a successful transition into the community; expand the availability and quality of community-based services; and ensure that home and community-based services are equally available to all qualifying individuals with disabilities. These guidelines will clarify that:

- Individuals do not have to be confined to their homes for personal assistance services to be covered under the Medicaid home health benefit, and that to require people receiving these services to be confined to their homes is a violation of the Medicaid statute;
- States with home and community-based services are allowed to pay for personal assistance services while waiver participants are hospitalized or away from home;
- States can receive Federal funding for targeted case management for individuals leaving institutions for community residences in order to facilitate their access to necessary medical, social, and educational services in the community; and
- States have the option to provide prevocational, educational, and supported employment services under Medicaid waivers to people of all ages in all target groups.

Create a Nearly \$20 Million Investment in a Public-Private Partnership to Help Individuals with Disabilities Transition into Community Living.

Today, Vice President Gore announced that HHS and HUD will commit to a new investment, subject to appropriations, of nearly \$20 million over five years in a public-private partnership with the National Project Office on Self Determination. The agencies are committing \$5.5 million for the first year subject to the availability of the appropriation, and are seeking to commit an additional \$14 million over the life of the partnership. This unique partnership, which will also utilize on multi-million dollar investments already made by these agencies, is entitled Access Housing 2000. It will focus on expanding the availability of accessible, affordable housing for people with disabilities and providing necessary support to enable individuals with disabilities make the transition from institutional settings to community living.

Expand Incentives for Employment for Individuals with Disabilities to a Broader Range of Housing Assistance Programs.

The Vice President announced that the Administration will issue a new rule that would expand incentives for employment for people with disabilities, extending earned income disregards, currently applicable only to public housing, to tenant-based Section 8 housing vouchers, the HOME program, the Housing for Opportunities for People with AIDS program, and the Supportive Housing for the Homeless program. The Administration is also working on

legislative changes to extend the disregards to the remaining housing programs. The new rule will also clarify that deductions for disability-related expenses, such as medical or attendant care expenses, are applicable to the entire range of HUD housing programs.

Increase Home Ownership for Persons with Disabilities. The Vice President announced that HUD will send guidance to all approved FHA mortgagees emphasizing the agency's commitment to promoting home ownership for persons with disabilities. The letter encourages HUD's lender partners to make home ownership possible for individuals with disabilities through increased, but prudent flexibility when underwriting their loan applications.

Establish a National Mental Health Coalition to Promote Community-Based Services for Individuals with Mental Illnesses and Substance Abuse Disorders. Vice President Gore announced that the Center for Mental Health Services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will work with a broad-based group of public and private organizations, constituencies and consumers to create state and local coalitions to assist persons with mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders in accessing necessary services.

Develop and Deploy Assistive Technology and Technology that Enables Universal Design. The Vice President announced an Executive Memorandum requiring that the Interagency Committee on Disability Research publish a report identifying priority areas for the development and advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities, and that Federal agencies then develop a strategy for transferring such technology for the benefit of people with disabilities.

Announcements complement the Clinton-Gore Administration's longstanding commitment to providing high quality health care and work incentives for people with disabilities. The Clinton-Gore Administration has proposed several additional initiatives to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive high quality health care and do not face barriers to employment, including:

- Supporting families with long-term care needs through a \$3,000 tax credit. This new tax credit supports the diverse needs of families by compensating a wide range of formal or informal long-term care for people of all ages with three or more limitations in activities of daily living (ADLs) or a comparable cognitive impairment. It would provide needed financial support to over 500,000 non-elderly adults.
- Providing a new \$1,000 tax credit to offset some of the formal and informal costs associated with employment for people with disabilities. Eligible workers with disabilities would receive a \$1,000 tax credit beginning in 2000. This would help about 200,000 to 300,000 people, at a cost of \$700 million for 2000-04.
- Providing a real Medicare prescription drug benefit for people with disabilities. There are five million people with disabilities on Medicare. The Administration has proposed a Medicare prescription drug benefit option that does not rely on private insurers that have failed to extend prescription drug coverage to people with disabilities; is affordable and meaningful; and adequately financed and part of a plan to improve Medicare.

- Fighting for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. The Clinton-Gore Administration has been fighting for a strong, enforceable, Patients' Bill of Rights for over two years. The Administration has endorsed the Norwood-Dingell legislation, the only bipartisan proposal currently being considered that: protects all Americans in all health plans; requires all health plans to ensure continuity of care for patients in the middle of a course of treatment; prevents patients accessing emergency room care from financial sanctions; guarantees access to necessary and accessible health care specialists; and meaningful enforcement mechanisms that ensure recourse for patients who have been harmed as a result of a health plan's actions.

###

High tech employers.

Universities

- Research on campus
- hiring more people
- other businesses →

Employers

2 aspects to divide

- can ^{help} integrate
- w/o accessibility

Agencies →

studying issue of ~~Medicare~~
Medicaid reimbursement

Foundation

Set-up blue ribbon commission
→ rees

Bipartisan

Morning event → on tech.
display

Afternoon

→ visiting exemplary
cases, applying the tech.

ADA event

Section 508
SGA

element piece.

WRIW partnership

Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc: Matthew L. Bennett/WHO/EOP@EOP, Zina C. Pierre/WHO/EOP@EOP
Subject: Notes from Mtg. w/ Public Interest Groups

this is good feedback from a briefing HHS and others did for state/local groups to get input for the interagency guidance on fatherhood being done in response to the President's Fathers Day directive



Fathers Day_Exec Memo

----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 09/01/2000 07:12 PM -----



MIKE AMBROSE <MAMBROSE@OSASPE.DHHS.GOV>

09/01/2000 06:31:46 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc: mambrose@ACF.DHHS.GOV, lgilmore@OS.DHHS.GOV, Imellgre@OSASPE.DHHS.GOV
Subject: Notes from Mtg. w/ Public Interest Groups

FYI

The attached notes are from our discussion about the Guidance on responsible fatherhood with several national organizations on August 15. The participants had been sent both a copy of the President's order and a copy of the content outline, before the meeting.

Linda Mellgren and Mike Ambrose



- intgroupconsult.wpd

Message Sent To:

dmoore@ACF.DHHS.GOV
dpontisso@ACF.DHHS.GOV
jpride@ACF.DHHS.GOV
jsharman@ACF.DHHS.GOV
kclairmont@ACF.DHHS.GOV
kmchugh@ACF.DHHS.GOV
rmshelbourne@ACF.DHHS.GOV
sflanzer@ACF.DHHS.GOV
vba3@CDC.GOV
beeson-jennifer@dol.gov
menahem_herman@ed.gov
bob.dalrymple@fns.usda.gov
Jeffrey_M._Aron@hud.gov
budnick@ojp.usdoj.gov
mcbridej@ojp.usdoj.gov
Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP
Julie T. Bosland/OPD/EOP
USHAMWEL@SAMHSA.GOV
deborah.s.smolover@usdoj.gov

Message Sent To:

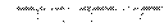
Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP
Michele Ahern/OMB/EOP@EOP
Debra J. Bond/OMB/EOP@EOP
Alison Perkins-Cohen/OMB/EOP@EOP
Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP

Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc: thomas a. kalil/opd/eop@eop, Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP, Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP
bcc:
Subject: RE: Webcasting the President's roundtable DD Discussion 

seems like a good idea
Jonathan M. Young





Jonathan M. Young
09/04/2000 02:09:12 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP, Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: RE: Webcasting the President's roundtable DD Discussion

Please see an email below for what I think would be a great idea: doing a live (and subsequently archived) webcast of the President's trip -- whatever portions of it we find suitable. If we did a CEO roundtable discussion, for example, I could imagine packaging it in such a way that it could be used as a future reference in a classroom or other settings. In this way, the trip would not only be talking about accessible technology, but also using accessible IT in the course of the trip. And not only that, we'd also be creating an accessible product that could be used to instruct about accessibility in the future. What do you think? If we go in this direction, it sounds like we'd need to give Steve and others a pretty quick indication so they could begin planning.

----- Forwarded by Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP on 09/04/2000 02:05 PM -----



"Jacobs, Steve I" <sj131264@exchange.DAYTONOH.NCR.com>
09/04/2000 01:59:35 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP
cc:
Subject: RE: Webcasting the President's roundtable DD Discussion

Great Johathan! We will look forward to hearing from you.

Please make sure that everyone understands that it was our suggestion to fund and organize a webcapt [live webcast with captioning]. We do not want anyone thinking that we are doing a webcapt as a result of feeling pressure to do so or that anyone asked us to do one. Our offer to [try to] fund and do a webcast was completely of our own volition.

Steve

-----Original Message-----

From: Jonathan_M._Young@who.eop.gov

[mailto:Jonathan_M._Young@who.eop.gov]

Sent: Monday, September 04, 2000 1:49 PM

To: Jacobs, Steve I

Subject: Re: Webcasting the President's roundtable DD Discussion

Thanks; this sounds great! Let me touch base with Tom Kalil about it tomorrow. I'll forward your email for his review.

(Embedded

image moved "Jacobs, Steve I"

to file: <sj131264@exchange.DAYTONOH.NCR.com>

PIC20814.PCX) 09/04/2000 01:34:37 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Webcasting the President's roundtable DD Discussion

Jonathan,

Per our brief discussion regarding web casting... I made the contacts, I said I would, regarding "Webcaptng" of the "President's roundtable DD discussion with CEOs."

As I am sure you can appreciate... we need to know if the DD trip planners DEFINITELY support the idea of us having the roundtable webcapt. It would really be cool to be on the plane, also [not a requirement - just a thought].

We are about to move forward to fund and plan this effort. We have little time to spare. While we realize that there is a chance that the trip will need to be cancelled/postponed, and accept this fact as a business risk, we

do not want to move forward if someone is going to say, last minute, that they changed their mind about permitting the roundtable to be webcapted." Please let me know ASAP if there is DEFINITE agreement that we should move forward with a webcapt. I very strongly support doing a webcapt and are anxious to move forward with this effort. Of course... there will be no cost to the White House or DD planning staff to do the webcapt. We look forward to capturing this event in a manner that extols the virtues of accessible communications over via web! Also, it might be in everyone's best DD interests for us to prepare several questions for the president to ask regarding the webcapt. We need the go-ahead to do this also.

Sincerely,
Steve

Steve Jacobs, President
IDEAL at NCR
NCR Corporation
1529 Brown Street EMD-5
Dayton, Ohio 45479
Voice: (937) 445-6396
Fax: (212) 618-0205
TTY: (800) 855-2880
E-Mail: steve.jacobs@ncr.com
URL: <http://www.ncr.com>

IDEAL at NCR is an NCR business resource group whose mission is to support NCR associates with disabilities and the development of Information Technologies that are accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities.

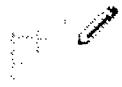
Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP@EOP, Barbara Chow/OMB/EOP@EOP, Jennifer E. McGee/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
Subject: Importance of Employment in Digital Divide trip

FYI. Jonathan makes a compelling point. My understanding is this digital divide/disabilities trip is tentatively on President's calendar for 9/21. Have you heard anything more definitive? We've made sure the Welfare to Work Partnership is plugged in, given their Board members' interest in hiring individuals with disabilities. Margy's also exploring ways to improve EITC outreach for individuals with disabilities, or parents with a disabled child.

----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 09/05/2000 08:25 AM -----



Jonathan M. Young
09/04/2000 10:30:38 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Mary E. Cahill/WHO/EOP@EOP, Gene B. Sperling/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP, Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP
Subject: Importance of Employment in Digital Divide trip

We've talked about this before, but the message of Labor Day underscored again the importance of ensuring that we use the Digital Divide trip as an opportunity to promote increased hiring of people with disabilities.

In the Disability Accomplishments document we deliberately left out the general economic record because it draws too much attention to the conspicuous absence of employment gains for people with disabilities. This past week I distributed White House materials relating to Labor Day and the Welfare to Work Partnership. Highlighting historically low unemployment for African Americans, Latinos, and women, and the lowest welfare rolls in 35 years, sparks questions: "what about people with disabilities?"

Part of the problem is a numbers issue: Tom and I have talked about how best to document statistics about people with disabilities generally, people with "significant" disabilities, and rates of unemployment or not working. Because disability is largely self-reported and we have structural and cultural linkages between disability and the inability to work (i.e. unable to perform "any substantial gainful activity"), it's difficult to get a good grasp on progress -- though I suspect it's there. In other words, as people with disabilities become employed they may be less likely to identify as disabled because they're working, thereby weighting statistics toward unemployment of people with disabilities -- a self-reinforcing cycle. Unfortunately, recent usage of the number "70% unemployment of people with 'significant' disabilities" gets translated into a perceived notion that more than 70% of ALL people with disabilities are unemployed (which is not true).

All of this leads to this point: Amidst otherwise compelling (astonishingly so) data on the American economy, we have yet to demonstrate solid gains in putting people with disabilities to work and getting

them off the rolls. As discussed from the beginning, information technology has arguably more potential than any other structural social change to level the playing field and translate into concrete employment gains. We're on the right track -- with the Work Incentives Improvement Act, the Workforce Investment Act, this summer's federal hiring announcement, the employment- and income-related Digital Divide goals, and other steps we're taking. To the extent this trip can help focus attention on public and private efforts to mobilize the use of technology to increase employment of people with disabilities, it can further help in achieving President Clinton's commitment to empower those who are not benefiting equally from our historic economic growth, and identify untapped resources to sustain that growth.

Message Copied To:

Lisa M. Brown/OVP/EOP@EOP
Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP
Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP
Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP@EOP
Anna Richter/OPD/EOP@EOP

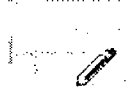
Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc: thomas a. kalil/opd/eop@eop, Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP, Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP
bcc:
Subject: Re: Sumarry of deliverables 

Just a process question - who else in the building are you including in the event planning? Shouldn't you also include OVP (Lisa Brown) and OMB? What about Marsha Scott, who was so involved in the ADA anniversary event?

Jonathan M. Young



Jonathan M. Young
09/05/2000 01:35:46 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP, Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: Sumarry of deliverables

I put together a document with some of the deliverables under consideration. I'd like to review some of these with you as soon as possible.



Summary of Potential Deliverab

Resources for Businesses

- Ticket to Work → ^{currently 10 year} any SSDI → Medicare Extended for life
- Small business tax credits → for assistive technology
 - \$1000 tax credit → work related expenses
 - for transportation or assistive tech.
- ✓ People could get ^{status} on board of Medicaid piece
 - Ed Park
 - ideas for HHS.

also call w/ Liz

SBA's move in SSA

Susan Siegal → Seattle

AAPD

Sacramento hide →

highlight
WIDA's

→ to start a business

ETA → low cost assets if you get govt benefits.

keeping SSDI, SSI

Susan Daniels, Rehab Act

► **Margy Waller**
08/29/2000 08:41:24 PM

.....

Record Type: Record

To: Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP, thomas a. kalil/opd/eop@eop, jonathan m. young/who/eop@eop
cc: christina s. ho/opd/eop@eop, julie t. bosland/opd/eop@eop
bcc:
Subject: Re: Conference Call on Digital Divide 

I will be on the call.
Andrea Kane

Andrea Kane 

Record Type: Record

To: Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP, Margy Waller/OPD/EOP@EOP, Julie T. Bosland/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP, Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP
Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

Christina/Margy/Julie - one of you should participate in the call. Tom/Jonathan - pls include Christina, Margy and Julie on your emails. I'll be out Wed and Thurs so if you send only to me nothing will happen. Per the note I sent earlier, Liz Summy, Dep COS from HHS can't do 3. I didn't realize the 3 pm was with all the other agencies - it does seem a shame that someone from HHS can't be on the call. Unfortunately Liz is extra busy since COS is out this week, and her special assistant David Sobelman is also out.

Tom/Jonathan, if you want to ask Linda Cooper, her assistant to try to get someone else on the call, feel free. Otherwise you should proceed w/ setting up a separate call w/ Liz and others at HHS whenever works for all of you tomorrow.

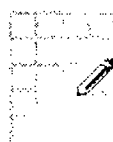
----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 08/29/2000 07:04 PM -----

 **Thomas A. Kalil**
08/29/2000 05:58:31 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Conference Call on Digital Divide

----- Forwarded by Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP on 08/29/2000 05:56 PM -----

 Jonathan M. Young
08/29/2000 01:49:32 PM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

I. SUMMARY:

During your April trip on the "digital divide," you announced that you would have an event that focused specifically on how new information and communications technologies can help people with disabilities. This trip is currently scheduled for September 21st. This memo identifies our proposed objectives for the trip, some options on site venues, and potential deliverables.

II. GOALS FOR THE TRIP:

After extensive outreach with the disabilities community, we have identified 5 goals that we think you should use this event to promote -- by calling attention to the issue and by announcing concrete commitments by the government, industry, and non-profit organizations.

1. **Existing IT products and services should be designed from the beginning to be more accessible for people with disabilities:** Currently, not all IT products and services are accessible for people with disabilities. For example, someone who is blind can't use the Web if a Web page uses graphics without also including text.
2. **We should improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology:** Through research and development, we can make it even easier for people to use IT - through technologies such as voice recognition for people who can't use a keyboard.
3. **Employers should take advantage of IT to expand employment for people with disabilities:** The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is much higher than the general population. Accessible IT could make it easier for employers to hire people with disabilities, and communications technology could allow more people with disabilities to work from their home. People with disabilities can thereby help fill the demand for high-skilled IT employees.
4. **Our existing "digital divide" initiatives should be designed so that people with disabilities can take advantage of them:** For example, our national network of Community Technology Centers should be designed to be accessible to people with disabilities. 7
5. **We should address inequities in access to assistive technology:** There are amazing technologies (e.g., people who are paralyzed can operate computers through the use of eye-gaze or brain waves) that are simply too expensive for low or moderate-income households.

III. SITE OPTIONS

Ideally, your trip would consist of two stops:

- The first stop would focus on the information technologies that can be used by people with disabilities. At this venue you could see demonstrations of assistive technology. We recommend **Madison, Wisconsin** or **Boston, Massachusetts**.
- At the second stop, you would visit a successful program that is using technology to allow people with disabilities to work, improve their health care, or pursue a science or engineering degree at a university. You could also do a roundtable with CEOs and people from the disabilities community that would discuss what steps the United States must take to ensure that all Americans with disabilities are benefiting from these new technologies. We recommend **Atlanta, Georgia** or **Kalamazoo, Michigan** or **Seattle, Washington**.

A. MORNING EVENT

Madison, Wisconsin

The University of Wisconsin, Madison campus would make a great backdrop for an event on accessible technology:

- It is the home of the Trace Research and Development Center, which is funded by the Department of Education to make IT more accessible for people with disabilities. Over the years, they have worked to make computers, the Internet, ATM machines, pagers and voice mail more accessible.
- Several of the courses at the University of Wisconsin teach undergraduate and graduate students about accessibility issues, and a number of engineering students have used their knowledge to develop accessibility projects in the community.
- Statewide, Wisconsin is a leader in hiring people with disabilities. With one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country for decades, its area businesses have been innovative in finding ways to bring people with disabilities into the economic mainstream.

Boston, Massachusetts

There are two very important accessibility projects in the Boston area:

- MIT is the home of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative. The World Wide Web Consortium is the industry consortium that develops the standards for the Web. The Web Accessibility Initiative has developed guidelines, which, if adopted widely, will make the web accessible for people with disabilities. For example, blind people rely on screen readers to "read" the text on a Web page. If a company or

*industry consortium
concerns who
standards.*

government web page uses graphics without also providing text, it will be impossible for someone who is blind to access it. The Department of Education is planning to increase its support for this project. The World Wide Web Consortium is run by Tim Berners-Lee, the man who invented the Web and has chosen to work on continuing to improve it as opposed to profit from the Internet "gold-rush."

- WGBH is the home of the National Center for Accessible Media, which is the national leader in closed captioning and descriptive video services. The Department of Education will be giving the National Center for Accessible Media a grant to develop standards to make "e-learning" accessible for people with disabilities.

Message

- We need to ensure that we develop IT products and services that are accessible for people with disabilities.
- Doing this will help everyone, not just people with disabilities, just as curb-cuts help families with baby strollers in addition to people with wheel-chairs.

Sequence Of Events

- You would see a demonstration of accessible technologies. An example is the "Eye-Gaze" system, which allows people with spinal cord injuries to operate a computer merely by looking at different parts of the screen.
- A speaking program with people from the high-tech industry and the disabilities community. You would announce most of the deliverables at the morning event.

B. AFTERNOON EVENT

Atlanta, Georgia

There are a number of excellent disabilities programs in Atlanta that would make appropriate venues for your trip, including:

- **Shepherd Center Telerehabilitation Program.** The Shepherd Center is a specialty hospital serving people with disabilities resulting from impairments that affect the central nervous system, such as spinal cord injuries and brain injuries. Through grants from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Education, and partnerships with the private sector, the Shepherd Center is now expanding the scope of patient treatment through telerehabilitation. Under this new program, patients will be provided a personal computer with a customized platform supporting videoconferencing, remote monitoring of vital health measurements, Internet access, multimedia instructional materials. The program will improve community reintegration (including return to work), bridge the gap

of services for people in remote areas, reduce secondary complications, and incur lower overall health care and support costs.

- Run by President's Committee*
- **Georgia High School High Tech.** With both public and private funding and the cooperation of businesses, federal and state agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and local school districts, High School High Tech uses site visits, mentoring, shadowing, and paid summer internships to provide students with opportunities to learn more about careers in scientific, engineering and technology-related fields. Georgia's HSHT program is one of the most active and extensive programs in the country. One group of students was recently honored at the Air and Space Museum for its successful design and execution of a Space Shuttle butterfly experiment.

Kalamazoo, Michigan

Kalamazoo has two programs that increase employment for people with disabilities:

- **Western Michigan University.** In cooperation with IBM, Smartforce.com, and Monster.com ~~the Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology (ARPCT)~~ is about to launch a national on-line support center for preparing people with disabilities for IT careers. The corporate partners have already donated over half million in this project to bring computer-based IT training to homebound and other individuals with disabilities.
- **Michigan Career and Technical Institute.** MCIT is the second largest comprehensive vocational rehabilitation training center in the nation. It trains over 800 individuals per year in a 10 different technology-related areas at its Planwell campus and many more through its statewide distance learning network. It offers two-year residential technical training for people with disabilities seeking new career opportunities. It is operated by the state-federal vocational rehabilitation program.

Seattle, Washington

The University of Washington at Seattle is the home of an NSF-funded, award-winning program called DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology). The program has a number of elements:

- It helps high-school students with disabilities pursue careers and college;
- Participants in the DO-IT program that are in college become Ambassadors and mentors to high school students;
- Students with disabilities participate in work-based learning;
- Young people with disabilities participate in a summer camp to learn how to use computers and the Internet;

- College faculty and administrators are given training on ways to work successfully with students with disabilities.

Message

- Information technology can help people with disabilities increase their participation in the workforce and go to college. If we want to be able to continue to grow our economy, we need to ensure that all people with disabilities have these opportunities.

Sequence Of Events

- Tour the program and meet with the people that are participating in it.
- Roundtable with employers, people with disabilities and experts to discuss future challenges in making assistive technology affordable to all Americans.

IV. POTENTIAL DELIVERABLES:

We are still working on developing additional deliverables, but these are some of the possibilities that we have identified so far. The disabilities community has urged us to focus on getting the private sector to make their products more accessible, not merely making specific financial commitments.

1. **High-tech CEOs adopt a company-wide accessibility policy:** Currently, very few high-tech companies have adopted an explicit corporate policy on accessibility. High-tech CEOs would commit to implement "best practices" such as:

- Training their workers to develop accessible products and services;
- Giving their developers adequate resources to design accessible products and services;
- Identify and fix accessibility problems in new versions of their hardware and software; and
- Supporting research and development to improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology.

2. **University presidents commit to expanding research and education on accessibility:** Presidents of the leading research universities would commit to:

- Ensuring that computer scientists and engineers receive training on accessibility;
- Expanding the number of faculty who conduct research on accessibility; and
- Ensuring that university online resources are accessible to people with disabilities.

3. **Companies agree to increase employment of people with disabilities:** Employers would agree to:
 - Target disability as part of their diversity recruitment goals;
 - Make assistive technology available to their employees; and
 - Promote the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships and mentorships.
4. **Commission on Assistive Technology:** We would announce that foundations are supporting a blue-ribbon commission of experts in industry and the disabilities community to develop policy recommendations in some key areas, such as financing of assistive technology for people who may not be able to afford it.
5. **Making educational content accessible:** The Department of Education will provide a grant to industry and the National Center for Accessible Media to make educational software and distance learning accessible for people with disabilities.
6. **Making the Web accessible:** The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will expand its funding for a joint project with industry to make the Web more accessible for people with disabilities.

Draft August 15, 2000

Dear Mr. President:

As the Presidents of a number of America's leading research universities, we are writing to express our support for your efforts to make information and communications technologies more accessible for people with disabilities, and to describe what our universities are prepared to do to support this objective.

This is an important goal. If we design information and communications technologies so that they are accessible, people with disabilities will find it much easier to live, learn and work as we enter the Information Age. If we fail to do this, people with disabilities could become increasingly isolated from the economic and social mainstream.

As universities with strong programs in engineering and computer science, we believe that we can make a significant contribution to this national goal. We educate the next generation of IT professionals and entrepreneurs, and provide continuing education for IT experts that are already in the workforce. Our faculty conducts the long-term research that often shapes and influences future developments in the information and communications industry, and which could lead to breakthroughs in accessibility. Each of our universities has unique assets that we can bring to bear on this problem, but we are all committed to taking concrete steps in this area. We will work to:

- Make "universal design" and accessibility part of the education that we provide to computer scientists and engineers at all levels -- undergraduate, graduate and continuing education;
- Ensure that our Web sites and on-line resources are accessible to people with disabilities;
- Look for ways to increase support for research to improve the state-of-the-art in this area by seeking federal, state, private sector and foundation funding -- and providing internal "seed funding" to new or existing faculty that wish to pursue this as a research topic;
- Contribute to efforts by the federal government to develop a comprehensive research agenda in this area;
- Help train experts who can serve as a national resource on this issue by participating in standards-setting efforts that incorporate accessibility, evaluating the accessibility of IT products and services, and providing technical assistance to companies seeking to enhance the accessibility of their products and services;
- Develop a strategy for increasing participation of people with disabilities in our computer science and engineering programs; and
- Encourage our faculty who are developing cutting-edge applications of IT to consider accessibility concerns.

Thank you for your leadership in this important area.

Draft August 18, 2000

As the CEOs of a number of America's leading high-tech companies, we strongly support your efforts to promote the accessibility of information and communications products and services for people with disabilities.

We believe that there are two compelling reasons to do so. First, accessible information technology can be a powerful tool for expanding opportunity in the emerging information society. If our products and services are designed to be accessible, people with disabilities will find it easier to work, access a growing universe of electronic information and services, and lead more independent lives. If we fail to do this, people with disabilities could be further isolated from the mainstream of our economy and our society. Second, there are sound economic and commercial incentives to make our products more accessible. Globally, there are over 750 million people with disabilities, and there are 55 million in the United States alone. Making our products accessible will also make it easier for us to serve the rapidly growing population of seniors. Moreover, increasing the accessibility of our products can often improve their functionality for everyone, not just for people with disabilities. Designing products and services that can give customers a choice of input and output mechanisms will help people with disabilities, but it will also help the mobile professional trying to access the Web on a handheld wireless device.

This issue requires private sector leadership. The federal government can help create the right policy environment, but it is ultimately companies that must design, develop and market accessible products and services. To make concrete progress on this issue, and to elevate its importance within our companies, all of us are committed to developing a corporate-wide policy on accessibility within the next six months. The specifics of our policies will vary because of the different markets that we serve, but all of us will seek to include the following private sector "best practices" as appropriate:

- Raise the level of awareness of accessibility issues within our company, and provide our employees with the training they need to design accessible products and services;
- Develop accessibility guidelines for products and services, and hold product development groups accountable for implementing these guidelines where technically and economically feasible;
- Involve people with disabilities in the development of our accessibility guidelines, or in the design and testing of our products and services;
- Devote sufficient product development and engineering resources to identify and rapidly address known accessibility problems, in future products and upgrades;

- Make it easier for our developer community to create accessible products and services by making available training, guidelines, and technology solutions;
- Document the accessibility features of our products and publicly-available services;
- Support internal and external (e.g. university-based) research and development that will improve the state-of-the-art of accessible technology that is relevant to our products and services; and
- Support implementation of standards that advance accessibility, such as the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines on accessible browsers, Web content and authoring tools.

As an industry, we will also commit to establishing a Web site that will collect private sector policies on accessibility as a way of encouraging the rapid dissemination and adoption of best practices. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. President,

As CEOs of leading American businesses, one of our biggest challenges is recruiting and retaining workers with the skills needed for our firms to compete and win in the global marketplace. We believe that one of the ways to meet this challenge is to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities, especially since new information and communications technologies will make it even easier for people with disabilities to participate in the workforce. We are therefore proud to commit ourselves to promoting the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of candidates and employees with disabilities.

This is important both to reach the inclusion goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act and to sustain our national economy. Despite historic economic growth, people with disabilities remain unemployed at rates unacceptably high -- several times that of the general population. Becoming gainfully employed gives people the economic means to become more fully integrated into our society and enhances one's sense of dignity. By hiring people with disabilities in our companies we can help change the social attitudes that continue to stand in the way of full inclusion of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities also represent an untapped resource that can help fill the need for qualified and highly skilled employees. A 30-year Dupont study, for example, has indicated that employees with disabilities have above average records in job performance, dependability, attendance, and safety. Today's information technologies provide an unprecedented opportunity for people with disabilities to expand the scope of their contributions -- and for our companies to meet the growing demand for workers. To make concrete progress toward increasing the employment of people with disabilities, complimenting the Federal government's recent hiring commitment, we are committed to taking the following steps:

- Target disability in our diversity recruitment goals as we do for minorities and women, including, wherever appropriate, specific hiring targets;
- Include disability issues as part of our company's diversity training for all employees;
- Incorporate images of disability in our company's internal and external promotional and marketing materials;
- Ensure that equal access to all company programs, including social activities, is incorporated into the early planning of those programs;
- Develop and promote reasonable accommodations policies, including the availability of assistive technologies;
- Promote the recruitment of youth with disabilities through summer internships, mentoring programs, "career awareness" activities, and community education programs that provide employment and leadership training; and,

- Create partnerships with disability organizations to identify barriers to employment for people with disabilities and to identify job candidates.

Thank you for your leadership in this area; we look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Deliverables for the ADA Events July 25 & 26

President

Theme: Employment Opportunities and Equality

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT	STATUS	ANNOUNCE
Increase the number of individuals with disabilities employed in the federal government.	The Federal Government shall hire 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over 5 year into all levels and occupations of the Government, to the maximum extent feasible.	Executive Order	DPC	July 26, 2000
Requiring Federal agencies to establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation.	Federal agencies shall establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.	Executive Order	DPC	July 26, 2000
Section 504 Enforcement	Federal agencies will work with the Department of Justice and EEOC to develop plans to evaluate agency programs, activities and facilities for compliance with sections 501 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federal programs and activities.	Executive Memo	DPC	July 26, 2000
Encourage Federal Agencies with Customer Service Call Centers to Explore Ways to Hire People with Disabilities (TF '99)	Agencies operating customer service centers shall examine the feasibility and appropriateness of using home-based employees as customer service representatives. If it is appropriate to establish home-based positions, agencies shall implement procedures that encourage the recruitment and employment of people with significant disabilities for such positions.	Executive Memo	DPC	July 26, 2000
Raise SSI Earned Income Exclusion to Encourage Work Efforts – SSA (TF'99)	Annually adjust per the average wage index the earnings guidelines that shows whether work done by persons with impairments other than blindness is substantial gainful activity.	Regulatory Change	OMB	July 26, 2000

→ *all A*

	Increase (from \$200 to \$530) the earnings amount that shows that a person has used one of his/her trial work months under SSDI, and then annually adjust the amount per the average wage index. Increase the maximum monthly (from \$400 to \$1,290) and yearly (from \$1,620 to \$5,200) Student Earned Income Exclusion amounts used in determining SSI eligibility and payment amounts, and then annually adjust these amounts per the CPI.			
Create "Access America for People with Disabilities" Web Site – SSA/DOL (TF '99)	Provide information and services offered by virtually every major federal government agency, by linking to an abundance of helpful Federal agency sites, programs and services.	Announcement of Web	Done	July 26, 2000
Strong, Enforceable Patient's Bill of Rights (TF '99)		Legislation	In Congress	Pending
Tax Credit to Assist Adults with Disabilities with Expenses Related to Work (TF '99)	Provide flexible ways to assist people with disabilities in defraying the costs of personal attendant services, technologies and other services required for employment.	Budget Proposal	In Congress	Pending

Vice President

Theme: Integration and Technology

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT	STATUS	ANNOUNCE
White House Conference on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (TF'99)		TBD	TBD	
Increased Funding for HHS/ OCR	This would enable the HHS/OCR to do more work with states to ensure that they are implementing the Olmstead decision.	Budget	Discussion – OMB	July 25, 2000
Technology: - Development/ Adoption of Information and Communication Technologies Used by People with Disabilities (TF '99) - Technology/ General - Technology/ Section 508 Task Force directive number 6 on funding Assistive technology	This would accelerate the development and deployment of assistive technology and technology that enables universal design. Assistive technology is used to maintain or improve the functional capabilities of people with disabilities. Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The development of assistive technologies and products that incorporate universal design principles can significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, and increase their ability to participate in the workplace.	Executive Order Pending – Curtis Pending – Curtis	Pending Pending – Curtis Pending – Curtis	? July 25, 2000 July 25, 2000
Access Housing 2000	This initiative through cooperative agreement between HHS/HUD and Robert W. Johnson would expand accessible, affordable housing for individuals currently residing in a nursing home or institution.	Bob Williams/ Henry Claypool/ Nestor Davidson and Becky Ogle	Discussion: OMB/HCFA Discussion: Jeanne/ Chris	July 25, 2000

Medicaid Income Disregards for HCBS		Regulation	Done	July 25, 2000
Systems Change Capacity Building Grants	This initiative would be created to fund states to engage in system change activities designed to build and enhance their capacity to provide personal assistance services and supports to people with disabilities of all ages.	Grant - \$50 Million over 5 years		July 25, 2000
Medicaid Technical Assistance Consortia		Partnership – TF, Educ, SAMHSA, HHS/HCFA		

First Lady
Theme: Youth

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT	STATUS	ANNOUNCE
Develop Youth to Work Initiative – DOL, Education, HHS, SSA, OPM, TF and Others (TF '99)	To ensure improvement in the education, transition, employment, health and independent living outcomes of young people with disabilities, all Federal agencies will coordinate and cooperate with the Task Force to: (1) strengthen interagency research, demonstration, and training activities; (2) create a public awareness campaign focused on young people with disabilities; (3) ensure that young people with disabilities are included in all youth programs mandated under the Workforce Investment Act; (4) increase access to health care and resources through an Interagency Council on Health and Ready to Work; (5) increase participation in postsecondary education and training; and (6) create a Youth Advisory Council to assist the Task Force in conducting these and other appropriate activities.	Amend Task Force Executive Order		July 26, 2000
Partnership between Task Force and Able to Work Consortium <i>partnerships</i>	This initiative would be a public/private partnership to ensure that youth with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to have meaningful internships that lead to real careers	Task Force and Able to Work Consortium talks		
Guidance on Non-Harassment of Students with Disabilities – Education		Dear Colleague Letter from Education	Done	July 26, 2000

HUD

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
VP INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYMENT	• HUD provides important incentives for individuals with disabilities who receive certain types of HUD housing assistance to enter the workforce.
CONSOLIDATED PLANNING FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	• HUD is requiring all states and localities that have already developed a Consolidated Plan to create a new plan during the year 2000. To encourage recipients to specifically address assisting adults and families with disabilities in this plan, the Office of Community and Planning Development (CPD) will distribute a publication entitled "Piecing it All Together in Our Community: Learning to Use HUD's Consolidated Plan to Expand Housing Opportunities for People with Disabilities."
DATA COLLECTION	• HUD is modifying its Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System (TRACS) to enable the Department to identify which units of the 30,000 assisted projects in the Department's multifamily inventory are accessible to persons with disabilities.
TAX CREDITS	• HUD is entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Departments of Treasury (including the Internal Revenue Service) and Justice that sets forth the reporting and other responsibilities of each Department when a multifamily project constructed and operated using Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) is found to be possibly or actually in violation of the Fair Housing Act.
VP HOMEOWNERSHIP	• HUD will send a letter from Assistant Secretary for Housing William Apgar to all approved FHA mortgagees entitled "Single Family Loan Production - Increasing Home Ownership Rates for Persons with Disabilities". This Mortgagee Letter will re-emphasize the Department's commitment to make home ownership a reality for persons with disabilities and encourage its lender partners to make this dream possible through increased, but prudent flexibility when underwriting their loan applications.
OUTREACH AND INFORMATION ON REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT	• HUD will issue a notice to reemphasize the responsibility of Community Development Block Grant recipients to further affirmatively fair housing and to assess compliance with the requirements of the Fair Housing Act (the Act) concerning accessible multifamily design and construction.
ACCESS HOUSING	• HUD is planning to send to its housing and community development partners a joint letter with the

	Department of Health and Human Services to highlight the importance of the <i>Olmstead</i> principle and to encourage its partners to find ways to expand accessible, affordable housing for persons with disabilities.
NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK CENTERS	• Over the next year, HUD will review and modify the current Neighborhood Network Center's evaluation form to include questions regarding the Centers' accessibility and what needs there might be to make the Centers accessible.

HHS/ SAMHSA/ HCFA

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
INCREASING HEALTH CARE COVERAGE <i>done</i>	• <u>Federal Employee Benefit Plan – A Parity Model that Works</u> – HHS/SAMHSA is working with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to ensure and evaluate mental health parity for Federal employees, demonstrating a model for other employers to emulate. • <u>Creating a National Safety Net</u> – Components of HHS are working together in the development of a new safety net initiative, the Community Assistance Program or CAP/ CAP is designed to meet the needs of the some 30 million plus uninsured Americans. The objective of this \$25 million initiative is to build comprehensive, integrated health care delivery systems that will offer a seamless continuum of care for the uninsured and underinsured.
IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY <i>fall</i>	• <u>Providing Employers with the Tools and Knowledge</u> – HHS/SAMHSA is planning to conduct a “National Summit on Employment of People with Psychiatric Disabilities.” This summit will provide businesses with the tools and knowledge they need to make informed decisions in increasing efforts to hire people with psychiatric disabilities and implement workplace policies to support such hiring.
ELIMINATING STIGMA IN ORDER TO REACH FAMILIES IN NEED	• <u>Anti-Stigma Campaign</u> – HHS/ SAMHSA is working with the <i>National Mental Health Awareness Campaign</i> and within its own programming to educate the public, amplify the voices of people with psychiatric disabilities, and eliminate negative images. Anti-stigma posters, fact sheets, and brochures, along with a guide on how to respond to stigma, are being developed.
REDUCING DISCRIMINATION <i>not done</i>	• <u>Creating a National Coalition</u> – HHS/ SAMHSA will support the creation of a National Mental Health Coalition to promote community-based care, in compliance with the <i>Olmstead Decision</i>**.

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
HCFA will modify its policies and practices to support the integration of Title XIX beneficiaries with significant disabilities into the American workforce by issuing new policy guidance and offering technical assistance emphasizing flexible, non-categorical implementation of the Medicaid program to state Medicaid directors that:	• Clarifies and encourages the use of existing Medicaid coverage options (such as personal care; clinic services; rehabilitative services; and HCB waiver programs) to be used to finance supported employment and other work related services for working-aged recipients with disabilities. • Explains options available to states to create a special income eligibility category for Title XIX beneficiaries that provides clear and reasonable incentives to engage in work and increase earnings without jeopardizing Medicaid eligibility.
HCFA will revise Medicaid program manual and issue policy guidance to encourage use of individual budgets that enables customer choice and control.	
HCFA will develop strategies to assist states to provide incentives for employment by authorizing higher reimbursement rates for integrated employment outcomes.	
HCFA will add premium on federal financial participation in Medicaid reimbursement to states that adopt a Medicaid buy-in.	
HHS will create an Olmstead Watch website that informs the public and multiple stakeholders on post-Olmstead activities.	

TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
DOT has conducted the initial interagency coordination, and has completed its "Comprehensive Plan of Action," addressing the lack of transportation services and systems for persons with disabilities, as directed by the President and recommended by the President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities. The Plan, designed specifically to address barriers to "finding and keeping jobs," will issue shortly.	
We expect to announce the issuance of two new regulations: one on DOT's adoption of Access Board's Updated Accessibility Guidelines and one extensive supplemental rule on safety standards for platform lifts and for motor vehicles using platform lifts.	
We will announce the impending issuance of volume Two of "Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access: A Best Practices Guide." This highly-anticipated guidance will provide much-needed technical advice on creating and adapting sidewalks and trails for use by all, including persons with mobility impairments, visual impairments, and other disabilities.	
We are working to complete a number of other deliverables, including issuance of a Report to Congress on Commercial Drivers Licenses for insulin-dependent diabetics; completion of an interagency Air Carrier Access Act outreach plan for travelers with a disability; issuance of a new Departmental policy statement and plan on Section 501 and Affirmative Action for Persons with a Disability; and the announcement of a biennial "Secretary's Excellence in Accessibility Award."	
Plan of Action to Address Transportation Services and Systems for People wit Disabilities (TF '99)	This comprehensive plan would be to concentrate federal efforts on developing an interagency action plan that addresses the lack

	of public transportation as a major employment barrier for people with disabilities. Secretary Slater July 21, 2000 DOT Celebration

must - Boston 3rd

DOL

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT
Create Office of Disability Policy Headed by Assistant Secretary – DOL (TF'99)	This office headed by an Assistant Secretary would bring a permanent and heightened focus on disability employment issues at the DOL	Budget Proposal
Strengthen Enforcement of Employment – related Nondiscrimination Provisions of ADA and Rehabilitation Act – DOJ, Labor, EEOC (TF '99)	Supplements the comprehensive compliance reviews with a variety of different means for assessing a contractor's compliance with Section 503 and its implementing regulations. Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires government contractors and subcontractors to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment individuals with disabilities. (Secretary Herman should announce this one)	OFCCP Regulation
Direct Workforce Investment Board liaisons re:	Secretary Herman, but possibly to be given to First Lady to be incorporated into overall youth agenda • Participation of youth with disabilities on youth councils	DOL Guidance (TIEN)

	• Need for states to be aggressive in ensuring that WIA structures address concerns of people with disabilities in their programs • Outreach to, and inclusion of, state MR/DD directors and state Medicaid directors on state WIBs	
15% set aside for technical assistance to workforce system promoting employment of people with disabilities at minimum wage or above		Secretary Herman

490C ones



EEOC

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT
EEOC – Guidance to explain Executive Order prohibition on genetic discrimination in federal employment.	EEOC's	

medical inquiries
Gen
Report on web of accomplishment
Mtg. for 2 hrs.

DOJ

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
AG will announce initiative to ensure that local government programs are accessible to people with disabilities	
Release "Enforcing the ADA: Looking Back On a Decade of Access"	Report highlighting the enforcement and technical assistance activities, will be posted on the DOJ website and will be mailed to the 8,000 disability rights activists on the mailing list.

OPM

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
Showcase success stories of the Federal government as a model employer.	Last October, the President released "Assessing Opportunity: The Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government, which the VP asked OPM to develop. OPM is compiling success stories from federal agencies and departments, which showcase stories of the Federal Government as a model employer.
Announce final regulation to make it easier for agencies to hire people with psychiatric disabilities	This regulation will level the playing field for those with psychiatric disabilities by giving them the same hiring opportunities as other people with disabilities.

Nothing
 SBA
 State Dept
 Commerce - Methodology
 USDA: agency element
 FCC
 video captioning
 FBI

Health Deliverables

Olmstead case

Recommendation	Description	Format	Status	Announce
Access Housing 2000 <i>5 yr. plan</i> <i>400/ 40 states</i> <i>2000 vouchers</i> <i>help on IDA's</i>	This initiative through cooperative agreement between HHS/HUD and Robert W. Johnson would expand accessible, affordable housing for individuals currently residing in a nursing home or institution.	Bob Williams/ Henry Claypool/ Nestor Davidson and Becky Ogle	Discussion: OMB/HCFA	July 25, 2000
Medicaid Income Disregards for HCBS	This regulation would provide states with greater flexibility in covering categorically needy individuals.	Regulation – over \$700 million over 5	PENDING	July 25, 2000 July 25, 2000
Systems Change Capacity Building Grants	This initiative would be created to fund states to engage in system change activities designed to build and enhance their capacity to provide personal assistance services and supports to people with disabilities of all ages.	Grant - \$50 Million over 5 years	PENDING	
SMD letters clarifying Olmstead decision	These letters would provide guidance to states clarifying additional flexibility that exists for providing home and community based care services and reiterates current policy on eligibility for benefits.	None	Close to resolution.	
- Medicaid Technical Assistance Consortia - Tech Transfer	<i>(Pres. Budget 35M for tech.)</i>	Partnership – TF, Educ, SAMHSA, HHS/HCFA		

• Kennedy - Grassley youth

positive Administration Statement on this

↓
Ticket to Work WIA

allows kids to keep Medicaid if parents go back to work.

Andrea Kane

Record Type: Record

To: Christina S. Ho/OPD/EOP@EOP
CC:
Subject: VP Gore Attends Disability Community Briefing

----- Forwarded by Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP on 08/29/2000 10:32 AM -----

 Jonathan M. Young
08/29/2000 10:25:41 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Clifton G. Kellogg/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: Andrea Kane/OPD/EOP@EOP, Thomas A. Kalil/OPD/EOP@EOP
Subject: VP Gore Attends Disability Community Briefing

HEre's info about the MOU

----- Forwarded by Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP on 08/29/2000 10:24 AM -----

 Jonathan M. Young
10/24/99 05:41:16 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jonathan M. Young/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: VP Gore Attends Disability Community Briefing

In an earlier email I invited all of you to attend a Clinton-Gore Administration Briefing on Disability Issues on Wednesday, October 20. We were honored to have the added participation of Vice President Al Gore, who wanted to join the briefing, speak about disability policy, and witness the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Small Business Administration and Social Security Administration. Below please find a press release about the MOU, an agenda from the briefing, Vice President Gore's prepared remarks, and SBA Administrator Alvarez's prepared remarks.

Congratulations and thank you to SBA Administrator Alvarez and SSA Commissioner Apfel on their efforts to promote the employment of people with disabilities, including entrepreneurial opportunities. Thanks also to all the speakers for providing updates on their

agencies' activities, and for being flexible as we adjusted the program to welcome Vice President Gore. Special thanks to Michelle Kreiss, of the Small Business Administration, for helping to make the event such a success.

=====

**U.S. Small Business Administration
NEWS RELEASE
PRESS OFFICE**

Release Date: October 20, 1999
Release Number: 99-87

Contact: Patricia L. Young (202) 205-6740
Internet Address: www.sba.gov/news/

**U.S. Small Business Administration and Social Security Administration Join
Forces to Help Americans with Disabilities**

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) have joined forces to help improve employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for Americans with disabilities.

As part of President Clinton's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, the two federal agencies signed a partnership agreement to coordinate the efforts of SBA's Welfare-to-Work initiative and the SSA's Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs to help adults with disabilities find gainful employment or become entrepreneurs. Vice President Al Gore witnessed the signing ceremony today in the Indian Treaty Room of the Old Executive Office Building.

"When the President created the Employment of Adults with Disabilities Task Force, the SBA became an enthusiastic and committed member," SBA Administrator Aída Alvarez said. **"We have undertaken an aggressive outreach campaign to inform people with disabilities about SBA programs and services. The partnership with Social Security is another step forward to link small businesses seeking workers with Americans with disabilities."**

"As a nation, we are best served when all of our citizens have the opportunity to contribute their talent, ideas and energy to the workforce," Commissioner of Social Security Kenneth S. Apfel said. **"President Clinton and Vice President Gore have made employment of persons with disabilities one of their highest priorities."**

As part of the agreement the SBA and SSA plan to advise their respective field offices of the important role each agency can play by coordinating the efforts of SBA's Welfare-to-Work

initiative and the SSA's Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs. Each agency will encourage its field offices to cooperate at the local level, share information about businesses and non-profit organizations that train beneficiaries with disabilities, and work together on job fairs and other community outreach activities.

The partnership agreement is the result of a presidential executive order, which created the President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities in 1998. The SBA and 10 other federal agencies are working together to develop small business and entrepreneurial activities for adults with disabilities and to increase the employment rates as close as possible to that of the general adult population.

For more information on these and other SBA programs, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA, or visit the SBA's extensive website at www.sba.gov.

=====

DISABILITY COMMUNITY BRIEFING
Old Executive Office Building, Room 474
Wednesday, October 20, 1999, 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

AGENDA

WELCOME

Laura Efurd

Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director, White House Office of Public Liaison

SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Vice President Gore

Aida Alvarez

Administrator, Small Business Administration

Kenneth S. Apfel

Commissioner, Social Security Administration

PRESENTATIONS

Judith E. Heumann
Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, DOED

Becky Ogle
Executive Director, President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities, DOL

Liz Savage
Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, DOJ

Susan Daniels
Deputy Commissioner for Disability and Income Security Programs, SSA

Pam Gregory
Director of Disability Issues Task Force, FCC

Michael Winter
Associate Administrator for Budget and Policy, DOT

Robert Williams
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Disability, Aging, and Long-Term Care Policy, HHS

=====

**REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE
NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH BRIEFING
Wednesday, October 20, 1999**

I'm delighted to be here today, to help celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Let me tell you why I wanted to be with you today:

I see on the horizon an America where people with disabilities are fully respected for the abilities they have, everywhere in this land. And this I believe with all my heart: no physical or mental disability can limit the human potential to work, create, and contribute to our national life.

Some of you may know that my aunt Thelma was blind; my mother took her to college with her, paying her way, and taking notes and reading assignments for the both of them. But what she lacked in sight, she more than made up with a dedicated mind and a loving spirit. All my life, she was one of the most able people I knew.

And I have dedicated myself to fighting for Americans with disabilities for much of my career.

I'm proud that I was an original Senate co-sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

As we approach a new century, I'm committed to ensuring that all Americans -- including the 30 million working-age adults with disabilities -- have the chance to become full partners in the American Dream.

Our Task Force on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities has given us powerful ideas to break down the barriers that remain. I was proud to accept the report's recommendations last December -- and we've acted on every single one of them.

As many of you know, I asked our Office of Personnel Management to develop a plan to increase the federal government's hiring of people with disabilities, and the President formally released that plan on Saturday. We're now asking agencies to act on it right away. I believe our government should be a model employer -- and that's why I'm working to make it one.

We are fighting to pass an ambitious, \$2 billion initiative to improve health care and remove barriers to work for those with disabilities -- including a new \$1,000 tax credit for work-related expenses. And I call on Congress to send us the Kennedy-Jeffords bill, so the President can sign it into law.

We have proposed more than doubling our investment in information technologies that can remove the barriers to employment and full participation.

And today, I am proud to make a brand new announcement. As some of you know, we've been trying to improve disability policy by connecting our federal agencies with each other. Today, our Social Security Administration and our Small Business Administration are signing a special Memorandum of Understanding, to create an important new partnership.

Social Security works closely with many people with disabilities who want to find jobs and succeed in the workforce. SBA works with small businesses who are looking for talented employees. By connecting these two agencies, we will help countless people with disabilities enter the workforce -- and succeed in it.

I believe this should just be the beginning. We need we need to do even more to expand employment opportunities; expand educational opportunities; invest in new technologies to make our society more accessible; and enforce our civil rights laws -- so discrimination on the basis of disability becomes an ugly relic of the past.

All over our country, there are individuals right now who have potential that is unrecognized. They can make vast contributions -- but only if they are connected to our society.

Working together, I know we will make it so. Thank you -- and keep up the great work.

=====

= = = = =

Remarks prepared for
SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez
Partnership Signing with SSA
Washington DC
October 20, 1999

I am proud to be here today with the Vice President and the Commissioner of Social Security.

The President and Vice President have emphasized that some people haven't fully shared in the record prosperity we enjoy today. Among them are Americans with disabilities. Nearly 70 percent of them are unemployed -- when the overall unemployment rate is at a record low!

The Vice President has outlined steps he is taking to improve the jobs picture for Americans with disabilities, starting with the federal workforce. The government should serve as a model for the private sector.

Yesterday the House of Representatives took a giant first step by passing the Work Incentives Improvement Act. That act ensures that people with disabilities do not lose health care when they take a job. Workers with disabilities could buy into Medicaid and could receive Medicare coverage when they return to work. Certain Social Security disability beneficiaries could also go to public or private providers of vocational rehabilitation.

That legislation and other government action will help bring more new jobs to the private sector. When the President and Vice President created the Task Force on Employment of People with Disabilities, SBA became an enthusiastic and committed member.

We started an aggressive outreach campaign to inform people with disabilities about SBA programs and services. We've also formed partnerships with other Task Force agencies, like HUD, to help Americans with disabilities find jobs.

With SBA leadership, the task force will hold workshops across the country to link local public and private small businesses with Americans with disabilities who want jobs.

We know that this kind of partnership can work. SBA's Welfare to Work initiative is a good example.

We know that the number one issue for small businesses today is finding qualified workers. That's why SBA got involved in the President's Welfare to Work effort. We could serve as a link between people on welfare who wanted to work, and small businesses that needed workers.

Through SBA's Welfare to Work initiative, by this time next year, there will be 200,000 new workers who used to be called welfare recipients. That's our goal, and, actually, we're on track to exceed it.

I'm proud to join forces today with Commissioner Apfel and the Social Security Administration. We are signing an agreement that commits us to action -- immediate action -- to provide job seekers with disabilities with better services, and with links to small business owners.

This agreement will:

- + Connect our vast national networks. SBA has 70 district offices, and scores of resource partners in every city and state.
- + SBA will link small business owners who are seeking qualified workers with SSA clients who are ready to work.
- + We will use our successful Welfare to Work model to increase job opportunities for adults with disabilities.
- + SSA will call upon SBA to provide training to their clients who may want to start their own business.
- + SBA and SSA will work together on public outreach to make sure that Americans with disabilities know about the resources we have available.

The SBA has already taken steps to help people with disabilities succeed at work and in small business.

- + This year in Clawson, Michigan, Dennis Figiel (FEE-gel), the president of National Millwork, became the first business owner with disabilities to receive SBA 8(a) Program and Small Disadvantaged Business status in that state. Mr. Figiel manufactures millwork, fixtures, and signage products. Now, he has an edge in competing federal contracts.
- + In San Diego, the SBA District Director meets regularly with the Disabled Businesspersons Association to make sure they are meeting the needs of entrepreneurs with disabilities.
- + The Small Business Development Center at Towson State University in Baltimore sponsors special training classes for aspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities.

We at the SBA look forward to working with the Social Security Administration and all of our federal partners to make sure the doors of opportunity are open for all Americans -- including

Americans with disabilities. Thank you.