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Jeff Shesol

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

REMARKS TO COMDEX SPRING CONFERENCE

McCORMICK PLACE

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

April 18, 2000

CCi
Speechwriting

✓ 4-20-00

Acknowledgments: Sec. Slater; Reps. William Jefferson, Silvestre Reyes, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Jan Schakowski; FCC Chair Bill Kennard; Rev. Jackson; Gene Sperling; Maria Echaveste; Frederic Rosen, Chair & CEO of Key3Media; Jason Chudnofsky, Pres. & CEO of ZD Events; Director Tony Streit [*Stright*] & the young people from Street-Level Youth Media (*thank for tour*)

Bob Williams

I am glad to be the first President to address this conference. I am sure I won't be the last! Over its 21 years, Comdex has become much more than a trade show for industry insiders. As I saw on my tour today, it's sort of an open celebration of ideas, of innovation, of the ingenuity that has driven this industry from the very start.

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The IT industry is too young, too new, for us to get nostalgic about the way things used to be. But I do want to read you something that dates back to the Comdex show of 1984, the year that vendors offered a low-cost laser printer – for only \$5,000. (That was nothing. A couple of years earlier, they went for \$30,000.) Here's what one magazine had to say in 1984: "Comdex," it wrote, "has come to serve as a compass from which . . . the direction of the microcomputer business can be accurately [read]."

That was 16 years ago. The same can be said today, but with even greater confidence. Your companies have not just marketed new trends – you've set them. This year, I want to challenge you to set another new trend.

I hope you'll devote more of your time and technology, more of your ideas and energy, to closing the digital divide – the growing gap between those who have the tools and skills and the motivation to succeed, and those who don't.

At the start of this new century, as our new economy surges forward, we know there are people and places being left behind. Over the past year, on my New Markets tours, I have traveled to many of them – from the hills and hollows of Appalachia to the heart of the Mississippi Delta; from Englewood, in inner-city Chicago, to Pine Ridge, at the outer reaches of Indian Country – shining a spotlight on opportunity where it is too often overlooked.

Yesterday, I began this third New Markets tour in East Palo Alto, California – because I wanted our nation to know that even in Silicon Valley, there are many Americans who have yet to enter the Information Age.

Also yesterday, ^{at Sanguich, in the high for northern} in Indian Country in New Mexico, we

saw the vast distances that must be overcome ~~literally~~ in building an information infrastructure to encompass all

America, ^{and the distance doesn't seem have to be overcome}

For all the jobs & our countries we can move more people out of poverty more quickly than ever before if we can bridge the big

So – and let me pose this question bluntly – why am I

~~here?~~ After traveling to some of America's hardest-

^{That's} pressed places, why ^{I have} in the world have I come here, to

Comdex, to ~~meet with~~ America's highest powered, high-tech elite?

big =
They are
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broadband
communications
to all areas
in the world
This is a
big step
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4-20-00

~~Let me tell you why. I have come to Comdex~~
~~because I want to talk to you directly. I have come to~~
~~seek your support. I have come to tell you about the~~
~~important choice~~^{and}~~we have before us – and to suggest what~~
~~you can~~~~date~~ help America make the right choice, ~~The~~
~~technology you create, and the ideas you generate, help~~
~~drive our new economy. They can also ensure that no one~~^{to make sure}
~~gets left behind – moving millions of Americans from the~~
~~economic margins to the mainstream, moving more~~
~~people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in~~
~~history.~~

~~So~~ this is our choice: we can use these new
technologies to widen the circle of opportunity; or we can
allow the digital divide to widen along the lines of
education, income, region, and race.

4-20-00

Usually at choice & also to see it choice —
~~We can accelerate the most powerful engine of wealth the~~
~~world has ever known, or we can allow that engine to~~
~~stall. As any economics textbook will tell you,~~
 technology will continue to drive growth upward — only
 as long as technology continues to spread outward,
 reaching into every sector of our economy and every
 corner of our country.

W. L. H. & E. & F. in list, fueled by high prod. noted in
 IT — Big Q. & how to keep it going 40 inflation — closing
 Big 2, could opening thousands — new B. new work, new companies will come
~~Our imperative is clear: We must open new markets~~

~~and new opportunities; and we must close the digital~~
~~divide. Because this is so strongly in our national interest,~~
~~I am here to tell you what more we can do about it. And~~
~~because this is so strongly in your interest, I am here to~~
~~tell you what more you can do about it.~~

4-20-00

Like all Americans, you've got a big stake in our shared success. ~~Now, more than ever, businesses like yours are looking to expand, looking not just for new markets and new customers but for new workers.~~

~~Whether you're creating information technology and that's all of you – or just using information technology –~~

~~and that's just about everybody else – you need the highly~~

~~We have to find the right combination of initiative and skilled workers to do it. You have never had a better incentive to bridge the distance between the new economy and Americans. Still, incentive to search several exits off the beaten path, or to~~
~~Distance that is physical, economic, educational~~
~~give a chance to someone who might otherwise go~~

~~undiscovered.~~

On every one of my New Markets trips I have met intelligent, able Americans, eager for opportunity. Like the young people here today, they demonstrate that ^{ability} drive and dreams are distributed equally.

4-28-00

These Americans don't want charity. They want opportunity. ~~They want the high-tech, high-wage jobs that your companies create by the thousands. But whatever it is they desire to do - a high-tech job or a teaching job or the most important job of all, being a parent - they need to know how to use this technology. It will serve them well whatever they do.~~

~~How~~^{Can only} ~~are we going to~~ tap the potential of these new workers? ^{By} By working together. I have often said that government works best as a partner to the private sector - as a catalyst that helps create the climate for investment and opportunity.

4-20-00

That is the idea behind my New Markets Initiative: that ~~and can guarantee~~ tax incentives can leverage private-sector investment, can get capital flowing to people and neighborhoods it might otherwise miss. → We provide such incentive for them to invest in poor areas in LA, DC, Africa - I support them - would have incentive to invest in poor areas in town -

It's an approach that has appeal to both parties. Last fall, Speaker Hastert and I came to Chicago and pledged to work together on a bipartisan initiative to spur investment in new markets. We are making progress on that pledge. The House took an important step last week toward creating American Private Investment Companies, which will spur as much as \$1.5 billion in new private investment in hard-pressed communities.

It's a split it was why you tomorrow the effort is genuine - this is a new way to do it - An American Investment

4-20-00

It's also a comprehensive approach – toward opening new markets and closing the digital divide. In addition to our \$2.25 billion e-rate initiative, and our \$450 million Technology Literacy Challenge, my budget creates \$2 billion in new tax incentives to bridge the digital divide. It provides \$150 million to train all new teachers to use technology in the classroom, and \$100 million to create technology centers in 1,000 communities across the country, by the end of next year.

Today, I am pleased to announce the creation of 214 Community Technology Centers this year alone, and the ^{thru the students & adults can use to learn & the big's} substantial expansion of 136 more. We'll expand investment in these centers by more than \$86 million, half of it from state, local, and corporate commitments.

Not far from here, on the West Side of Chicago, is one of these centers. The young people I met today spend a lot of after-school hours there, at Street-Level Youth Media, where they can access the Internet and a whole lot more – classes in website design; projects in video production; and, most important, the chance to apply their skills in real work, for real wages.

I am also pleased to announce that we will double, by the end of next year, the number of Neighborhood Networks to 1,000. These computer learning centers – the fruit of a public-private partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development – have already helped the residents of some of our poorest neighborhoods to make the move from welfare to work; to increase their earnings; and to start new businesses.

Furthermore, to ensure that every new teacher in America can use computers effectively in the classroom, the deans of more than 200 colleges and universities have sent me a letter, pledging themselves to join in our effort. Their schools will hold themselves responsible for results, testing their progress with a self-assessment tool designed by the CEO Forum on Education and Technology – a forum that includes many forward-thinking companies represented here today.

But this is only a start. I want every person here, every entrepreneur, every engineer, to consider what you can do to help America seize this opportunity, and fulfill this fundamental obligation to our children and our future.

4-20-00

First, I hope you will support my National Call to Action, which I issued two weeks ago. Its basic goals are to provide 21st-century learning tools for every child in every school, and to create digital opportunity for every family and every community. I have called for businesses like yours to enlist in our effort – as well as schools, community groups, and volunteers. More than 400 organizations have already signed on. *They are doing amazing things to advance Ed & Es* I hope you will join them.

~~But second~~, I want you to do more than sign this pledge. I want you to fulfill it. I want you to ask yourselves what more you can do to ensure that all our children are computer literate.

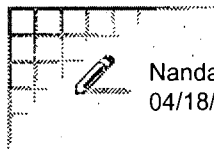
Ask what you can do to provide our schools with computers and high-speed connections; and to design the educational software our children need to succeed. Ask what you can do to make sure all our teachers are as comfortable in front of a computer as they are at a chalkboard. Many companies have already led in this effort, getting involved in our schools as experts, as mentors, as role models. I hope you will join them.

JS

~~Third~~, so that today's students can become tomorrow's workers, I hope you will expand the internships you offer. And not just that. Deepen your talent pool. Reach out to women and minorities, people with disabilities and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Go out and find the talent that might not otherwise find you.

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Fourth, and finally, build this effort upward from the grassroots. Forge new partnerships – with local groups and local government – and inspire your communities to get passionate about this cause. You can't develop a comprehensive approach on your own; and neither can we. But by working together, we can mobilize all the talent and technology it will take. By working together, we can empower people with the tools and the training to lift themselves out of poverty. We can close the digital divide and open untold digital opportunities for all Americans.

I ask you to do this because it is in your power to make a difference. I ask you to do this because it is in our national interest. And if we don't do it now, at this unprecedented time of prosperity and promise, when will we ever get around to it? Sixteen years ago, they called Comdex a compass. A compass, of course, points the right way. But you and I can do more than that. After this tour, I am going to go back to Washington and ask myself what more I can do. If all of us do the same, we can do more than point the right way. We can take a giant step in that direction – toward a better America and a future of even brighter promise. Thank you.



Nanda Chitre
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Subject: CORRECTION: Remarks By The President To COMDEX/Spring 2000

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Chicago, Illinois)

For Immediate Release

April 18, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO COMDEX/SPRING 2000

Arie Crown Theater
McCormick Place Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois

2:10 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Frederic Rosen, and thank you, Jason Chudnofsky. I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Director Tony Streit and the young people from Street-Level Youth Media who went on my tour with me over in the other part of the McCormick Center, to see some of the new wonders of the information technology revolution. I want to thank those who have come with me here today, on this last stop of this part of our New Markets tour, including several members of the United States Congress -- Jan Schakowsky of Chicago; Stephanie Tubbs-Jones from Cleveland; Silvestre Reyes from El Paso, Texas; and Representative Bill Jefferson from New Orleans.

I want to thank Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater, Federal Communications Chair Bill Kennard, Reverend Jesse Jackson, Bob Johnson, the President of Black Entertainment Television; and Gene Sperling and Maria Echaveste who operate this program for me out of the White House.

I am glad to be the first President to address this conference, but I am quite sure I will not be the last. Information technology has accounted for about 30 percent of this remarkable economic growth we've had, even though people directly working in IT only account for about 8 percent of our employment.

What we have tried to do in government is to provide the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of this phenomenal new era in human affairs. What you and people like you all across this

country have done, have made the most of that -- the balanced budget, the Telecommunications Act, doubling our investment in education and training, and dramatically increasing basic research, opening trade to new countries. And it's given us the longest economic expansion in history -- the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded; the lowest female unemployment rate recorded in 40 years. Poverty down to a 20-year low; the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years; the lowest overall unemployment in 30 years.

That is the good news. And it was brought about primarily by this incredible environment and the gifted people who have made the most of this celebration of ideas and innovation and ingenuity. But as Mr. Rosen said when he introduced me, what I have been focused on now in the last year-plus of my term as President is the people and places who have been left behind in this phenomenal new economy.

And I have for two reasons. One is, I think that all of us would like to see every American who is willing to work for it have a chance to be a part of this astonishing new era of enterprise. I think, just on pure ethical grounds, we all sense that the American values require that everybody be given a fair chance to participate. But secondly, I think it is in our economic interest to do it.

You know, we spend a lot of time in Washington discussing how in the world can we keep this economic expansion going? It's already the longest economic expansion in history, far longer than any other one that did not include a major war. How long can it go? What will happen? How will it come to an end? Will we really have inflation that will somehow bring an end to this long boom?

Well, it's clear to me that if we want it to continue, we have to do more to find new markets. New markets mean creating new businesses and new employees, as well as new customers. And if you do both, it means you can have growth without inflation. So this idea of closing the digital divide is good social policy. It's good personal ethics. But it's also very, very important for our continued economic expansion as a nation.

So I came here today to ask you to set another trend -- to devote more time and technology, more ideas and energy, to closing the digital divide, the growing gap between those who have the tools and skills and motivation to succeed in the economy which you come here to explore and celebrate and push the frontiers of, and those who do not have those at this time.

Now, over the past year I have been to a lot of these places. I have been to the hills and hollows of Appalachia; to the heart of the Mississippi Delta. I've been to Englewood here in inner-city Chicago, and to East Los Angeles. I've been to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, the home of the Oglala Sioux. I have tried everywhere to shine the spotlight on the potential, not the problems, of these places.

Yesterday, we began our third New Markets tour in East Palo Alto, California, right in the heart of Silicon Valley, because I wanted the American people to know that, even there, there are a lot of our fellow citizens who are not yet fully participating in the information age.

Yesterday, we also went to Shiprock, Navajo Country, in the far north of New Mexico, and saw the vast differences, the literal vast distances, literal distances in this case, that have to be overcome to build an information infrastructure that all of America is a part of. We visited a community living in the place where their forebears have been for more than a thousand years. We celebrated the Navajo Code-Talkers, who were very instrumental in America winning World War II with our allies in the Pacific because they developed a unique means of communication. They transferred messages back and forth in Navajo and the language was so different from any code or any known language that our adversaries in World War II couldn't break it. And it's quite ironic that a people whose major contribution to the modern world was helping us to win World War II based on unique communications now live in a place where 70 percent of them don't even have telephones.

I was introduced by a young woman, a 13-year-old young girl who won a contest -- really a bright young woman -- and she won this contest and she won a computer. And she found that she couldn't get on the Internet because she didn't have a telephone line in her home.

Next week, we're going to rural North Carolina to discuss the prospects of broad-band communications and what it might do to open opportunities in poor, rural, isolated places. And then in a couple of months we will have a part of this digital divide tour devoted solely to the potential that web accessibility offers to disabled Americans to participate more fully in the educational and economic life of the United States.

Now, this is all sobering at one level, but increasingly hopeful to me, because I honestly believe that the new information economy has the potential, at home and around the world, to lift more people out of poverty more quickly than at any previous period in all of human history -- and that tapping that potential is actually in our enlightened self-interest.

And that's why I came here today -- because I need your help and your support, because now we've come through all these years of this remarkable economic expansion, we have finally seen even income inequality begin to diminish over the last two and a half years, as more and more Americans at the lower end of the income scale begin to fully participate in the economy. We have a very important choice before us. And only with your help can America make the right choice -- to make sure that no one is left behind; to use these new technologies to widen the circle of opportunity rather than allowing the digital divide to widen the lines of division in education, race, income and region. I will say again, it's not only morally the right choice, it's not just good social policy, it is imperative, in my judgment, if we're going to keep the economy growing, to find new places where we create not only new customers, but new businesses and new employees.

Now, I believe we've got to find the right combination of incentives and initiative to bridge this divide. The distances that exist are -- in some cases, as I said, they're physical. They're also educational, and they're clearly economic. But on every one of these New Markets trips, we have met people who are eager for opportunity. And like the young people here today who made this tour with me, they demonstrate that ability and drive and dreams are evenly distributed throughout the human race and throughout American society. It is opportunity which is still not evenly distributed.

Everywhere I have been, I find Americans who are not at all interested in charity, but are very interested in opportunity; not a handout, but a hand up. We can only tap the potential of these new workers, these new business owners, these new learners, if we work together. Over and over again over the last seven years, I have found, in some of our most important endeavors, the only thing that really works is the right kind of public-private partnership.

I'll just give you one example. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years. The welfare rolls have been cut roughly in half since I became President. And part of it is the laws that have been passed, including the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, which required people who could work to work, but also invested more money in child care for their children and transportation so they could get to work, and kept their kids in food and medicine while they were making the transition.

But part of it was this remarkable partnership now that numbers over 12,000 businesses -- people who committed that they would personally go out and find people, help them move from the welfare rolls, give them the training, give them the support they needed to succeed. And these people alone, just the 12,000 people in our partnership, have hired hundreds of thousands of people from the welfare rolls, many of whom were difficult to place but have succeeded. No government mandate could have gotten that done. If we hadn't had the public/private partnership, it would not have worked nearly as well as it has.

The Vice President has worked for more than seven -- or about seven years now -- in our

partnership with the auto companies and the auto workers on the new generation vehicle and we put a lot of money into it. But we couldn't develop a car in the government. And yet you see -- if you noticed in the last Detroit auto show, they're showing cars they expect to market in the next year or two, including larger cars, that get 70 to 80 miles a gallon. We have research going on now into the production of biofuels, not just from corn, but from agricultural waste products, even from grasses. And if we ever get the conversion level down to about one gallon of gasoline for eight gallons of fuel, biofuel, and then you get in a 70-mile-an-hour gas car, you'll be driving a car that gets over 500 miles a gallon in conventional terms. That will change the energy future of America and the world forever, and will prove something I deeply believe -- that we can conquer the challenge of global warming and continue to grow not only our economy, but the developing economies of the world.

All of this has to be done in partnership. And that's basically what I propose for closing the digital divide and creating new markets throughout America. What we want to do is to be a catalyst, to provide investment incentives and the kind of framework and tools that will enable people in the private sector to do what is in their interest anyway.

We believe that tax incentives and loan guarantees can leverage private sector investment in distressed areas; get capital flowing to people in neighborhoods in might otherwise miss, having basically nothing to do necessarily with high technology investment.

Today, if you want to invest in a poor area of Latin America or Asia or Africa, we have a framework set up that could get you a combination of tax breaks and loan guarantees to lower the risk of doing that. Why? Because we think that we have an obligation as Americans to help poor people around the world develop stable lives. We know it promotes democracy, it promotes peace, it promotes environmental cleanup, it undermines the destabilizing forces at work in the world. All I'm trying to do in terms of the law is to give Americans who have money to invest the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give them today to invest in poor areas in Latin America or Africa or Asia. I think that's the right thing to do. (Applause.)

Last fall, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Dennis Hastert, and I came here to Chicago, met with Reverend Jackson and Congressman Bobby Rush, and others, and we pledged to work together on a bipartisan initiative to spur investments in new markets. We are making real progress on our end of the deal. The House of Representatives took a very important step last week toward creating the American private investment companies that I've proposed to spur as much as \$1.5 billion in private investment in our hard-pressed communities. Now, I understand Speaker Hastert is going to be with you tomorrow and I think you will see, if this is part of the discussion, that his commitment is genuine. This should not be a partisan issue.

Every American, Republican, Democrat, independent, Green Party member, whatever -- every American has got a vested interest in seeing that every other American has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. So this is very, very important. And the main thing that we want to do with this portion of the New Markets Initiative is to make sure that we can get some investment in areas where people literally are isolated, where we need local, community-based investment, because you can't just say, well, we'll give them an education, they can hop on the subway or get in their car and drive to a job. But we also have to have a comprehensive approach that gives individuals the ability to bridge the digital divide, to create businesses which are far distant because technology permits them to overcome distances, and to get the education and training they need in the first place to succeed.

Now, what have we done in that? Well, when the Congress adopted the Telecommunications Act a few years ago, we insisted -- the Vice President and I did -- on something called the e-rate, the power of the Federal Communications Commission to set the e-rate. It is now worth over \$2 billion, and it gives discounts to schools, to libraries, public institutions, so they can afford to be a part of the Internet. And it's had a huge impact.

When I became President, only 3 percent of our classrooms, about 11 percent of our schools,

were connected to the Internet. We've been working on this hard, now, for six years. Today, over two-thirds of our classrooms, and 95 percent of our schools, are connected, including 90 percent of very poor schools. And we'll be -- by the end of the year, we'll probably be at 100 percent of the schools connected, except for those whose physical facilities are literally in too much disrepair to have a connection.

I know that may be hard for some of you to believe, but it's true. We have cities where the average school building is 65 years of age or more. We have -- there are schools in New York City that are still heated by coal-fired furnaces. But by and large, this e-rate has really worked.

We have a \$450-million technology literacy challenge, which is designed to make sure that we try to match contributions from others who put technology into our schools. Our budget offers \$2 billion in new tax incentives to help bridge the digital divide, to get the technology into the schools and into the rural communities, into community computing centers -- and things like that can be available to adults as well as children.

We provide \$150 million to train new teachers to use technology in the classroom -- so that they aren't repeatedly embarrassed by their students knowing more than they do -- and so that they can actually make the most of it, and \$100 million to create more technology centers in 1,000 communities across the country.

Today, I can tell you that 214 of these community technology centers will be created this year alone and 136 more will be expanded. These are very important because they are not only available to young people, but also to adults who can use such centers after work and themselves acquire these skills. It's very, very important that we recognize that this cannot be solely the province of the school years. We have got to do more to bring adults who have been left on the other side of the digital divide into the economic mainstream. We are going to expand our investment in these centers by about \$86 million from state, local, private and federal sources together.

Not far from here, on Chicago's West Side is one of these centers. I mentioned the young people I met today from there, at Street-Level Youth Media. They spend a lot of their time there. They are here in this audience today. They can access the Internet and a lot more. They can have classes in website design, projects in video production and, most important, the chance to apply their skills in real work for real wages. Every child in America should have this opportunity and we are trying to give it to every child in America. (Applause.)

If the budget passes, we will have 1,000 of these neighborhood networks next year. That is double the number we have now in the country. These computer learning centers are the fruit of public/private partnership under the leadership of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. They have already helped residents of some of our poorest neighborhoods move from welfare to work, increase their earnings, even start their own businesses.

One of the things that is totally unappreciated about the nature of the Internet revolution is the extent to which it gives people who are otherwise completely out of the economic mainstream -- who could never have access to the kind of up-front capital it would take to start a traditional business and rent a big office space -- the chance to actually earn money on the Net. The first time I discovered this was when some of my friends at eBay told me that they now have 30,000 people making a living off eBay -- not working for the company, but making a living buying and selling and trading -- and that the profiles indicated to them that a very substantial number of these people had previously been on welfare.

So again I will say, if you believe that there is an equal distribution of intelligence, ability, and dreams throughout the population, and if you have seen in your own lives what this has done for you and for this economy, it seems to me that closing the digital divide is one of the most important things we

could do that would have the quickest results in alleviating the kind of poverty which is inexcusable in the kind of economy we're experiencing today.

Let me also say that -- I made a joke about it earlier, but I think the idea of having teachers who are really able to make the most of technology in the classroom, and teach their students, is something that's very important. Everybody I have ever worked with on this in the last several years -- all the heads of all the companies that have tried to really help our schools continue to hammer this.

I got a letter from the deans of more than 200 colleges and universities, pledging to join in that effort, holding themselves responsible for results, being willing to test their progress with a tool designed by the CEO Forum on Education and Technology, a forum that includes a lot of the companies that are represented in this auditorium today. But this is a big deal. This is a serious commitment that we haven't had in the past. And I want to thank the Forum on Education and Technology and these 200 deans for what they want to do to train our teachers.

But this is just the start. So here is what I came to do really. I want to ask you to do the following things. First of all, if you are not already a part of it, I hope that the companies, everyone represented here from the largest to the smallest, would support our national call to action, which I issued two weeks ago. Its basic goals are to provide 21st century learning tools for every child in every school and to create digital opportunity for every family and every community.

I have asked for businesses and schools and community groups and volunteers to enlist in the effort. More than 400 organizations have signed on in the first two weeks and they are already doing amazing things. Many of you have been working at this for some years now, to help in education and in economic development. But if you are not part of this, I hope you will become part of this. I hope you will do more than sign a pledge; I hope you will commit to fulfill it.

I want you all to ask if there is anything you are not doing that you could do to give our schools computers and high-speed connections, to design the educational software our children need to succeed, to make sure our teachers are as comfortable in front of a computer as in front of a chalkboard. Again, I say many companies are leading this effort today, but we need more. The biggest problem in American education and the biggest problem in combating poverty and creating economic opportunity is not that there are no good ideas. Every problem in American education today has been solved by somebody somewhere.

I remember when I started running for President and I was coming to Chicago, there was a woman here from my home state of Arkansas who was principal of a junior high school that was in a neighborhood with the highest murder rate in the state of Illinois. And you had to ask to get into this junior high school. They had 150 mothers and 75 fathers in that school every week. They had a strict no-weapons policy; if you had one, you were history. They had a zero dropout rate. The kids went on to high school and did well, and a phenomenal percentage of them went on to college.

And I could give you lots of examples like that. The problem we have -- and in terms of closing the digital divide and education and economics, there are examples everywhere. The problem we have in America with social change is getting things to scale -- is reaching a critical mass of people. That's why I came here today. This is a critical mass of the IT community. And you need to reach a critical mass of the at-risk kids, and the communities where economic and educational opportunities are needed to close the digital divide.

The second thing I want to ask you to do, so that today's students can become tomorrow's success stories, is to expand internships and to deepen your talent pool. I just received a survey that I read just the day before yesterday indicating that, even making allowances for differences in education, women and minorities are still comparatively under-represented in most IT occupations. We can do a lot to close the digital divide just by equalizing the representation once people do have the education and

skills they need. (Applause.)

The third thing I would like to ask you to do is to recognize, as I said before, there is a limit to what the federal government can do. I intend to set up a framework and to try to provide the necessary tools and to generate as much activity as I can. But we need more partnerships at the local level with the schools, with the local communities, with the local community groups and with local government. I think you will find that if you are not involved in this kind of work, there is more interest in it than ever before and people are eager for help.

If we work together, we can empower people with the tools and the training they need to lift themselves out of poverty. If we work together, we can give people the ability to use new technology to start new businesses. If we work together, we can close the digital divide and open digital opportunities.

I am asking you to do this because you can. I am asking you to do this because it's right. And I am asking you to do this because America needs it, to have a continually growing economy.

The productivity increases generated by information technology in the IT companies themselves, and then through application throughout the economy, is what has enabled us to continue to grow at 4 percent and to keep inflation down. I am doing my best to open new markets around the world and to keep our markets open, which helps to keep inflation down and to grow. But the best opportunity we have are all those people out there that are dying to be part of what the rest of us may take for granted.

And I can tell you, I have lived longer than most people who do very well in the work that you do. Our country has never had an economy like this. The last time we had anything close was in the 1960s. It came apart over the competing claims and crises in civil rights and the war in Vietnam, and the attempt to finance all that and deal with the problems of the poor. I see a lot of people who are gray-headed like me out there nodding their heads.

And when it happened, when I grew up in it, I thought that economy would last forever. I just took it for granted that we were the most productive economy in the world, we were going to win the Cold War, we'd solve the civil rights problems in the courts and the Congress and everything would be hunky-dory. And then boom, one day it was gone.

And I've waited 35 years, as a citizen, for our country to have the chance to give all our people the future of our dreams for our children. That's the chance we've got now. And I know you're very busy, I know you have a lot of other things to do, but I don't know how many years we'll ever have to wait again until a moment like this comes along.

I can't do it alone. The federal government can't do it alone. But if we all do it together, there is nothing we can't do. We will never, ever, ever have a better chance -- and therefore, a more profound responsibility -- to close the digital divide.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 2:42 P.M. CDT

Message Sent To: _____

Final 04/17/00 10:30pm
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That was 16 years ago. The same can be said today, but with even greater confidence. Your companies have not just marketed new trends – you've set them. This year, I want to challenge you to set another new trend. I hope you'll devote more of your time and technology, more of your ideas and energy, to closing the digital divide – the growing gap between those who have the tools and skills and the motivation to succeed, and those who don't.

At the start of this new century, as our new economy surges forward, we know there are people and places being left behind. Over the past year, on my New Markets tours, I have traveled to many of them – from the hills and hollows of Appalachia to the heart of the Mississippi Delta; from Englewood, in inner-city Chicago, to Pine Ridge, at the outer reaches of Indian Country – shining a spotlight on opportunity where it is too often overlooked.

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So this is our choice: we can use these new technologies to widen the circle of opportunity; or we can allow the digital divide to widen along the lines of education, income, region, and race. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of wealth the world has ever known, or we can allow that engine to stall. As any economics textbook will tell you, technology will continue to drive growth upward – only as long as technology continues to spread outward, reaching into every sector of our economy and every corner of our country.

Our imperative is clear: We must open new markets and new opportunities; and we must close the digital divide. Because this is so strongly in our national interest, I am here to tell you what more we can do about it. And because this is so strongly in your interest, I am here to tell you what more you can do about it.

Like all Americans, you've got a big stake in our shared success. Now, more than ever, businesses like yours are looking to expand, looking not just for new markets and new customers but for new workers. Whether you're creating information technology – and that's all of you – or just using information technology – and that's just about everybody else – you need the highly skilled workers to do it. You have never had a better incentive to search several exits off the beaten path, or to give a chance to someone who might otherwise go undiscovered.

On every one of my New Markets trips I have met intelligent, able Americans, eager for opportunity. Like the young people here today, they demonstrate that drive and dreams are distributed equally. These Americans don't want charity. They want opportunity. They want the high-tech, high-wage jobs that your companies create by the thousands. But whatever it is they desire to do – a high-tech job or a teaching job or the most important job of all, being a parent – they need to know how to use this technology. It will serve them well whatever they do.

How are we going to tap the potential of these new workers? By working together. I have often said that government works best as a partner to the private sector – as a catalyst that helps create the climate for investment and opportunity. That is the idea behind my New Markets Initiative: that tax incentives can leverage private-sector investment, can get capital flowing to people and neighborhoods it might otherwise miss.

It's an approach that has appeal to both parties. Last fall, Speaker Hastert and I came to Chicago and pledged to work together on a bipartisan initiative to spur investment in new markets. We are making progress on that pledge. The House took an important step last week toward creating American Private Investment Companies, which will spur as much as \$1.5 billion in new private investment in hard-pressed communities.

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I ask you to do this because it is in your power to make a difference. I ask you to do this because it is in our national interest. And if we don't do it now, at this unprecedented time of prosperity and promise, when will we ever get around to it? Sixteen years ago, they called Comdex a compass. A compass, of course, points the right way. But you and I can do more than that. After this tour, I am going to go back to Washington and ask myself what more I can do. If all of us do the same, we can do more than point the right way. We can take a giant step in that direction – toward a better America and a future of even brighter promise. Thank you.

Draft 04/17/00 12:30pm
Jeff Shesol

*right at them
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I wanted to take the msg.
directly to you*

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO COMDEX SPRING CONFERENCE
McCORMICK PLACE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
April 18, 2000**

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or we*

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I want to thank you for inviting me to be the first President to address this conference. I will predict with some certainty that I won't be the last. Over its 21 years, Comdex has become much more than a trade show for industry insiders. As I saw on my tour today, it's sort of an open celebration of ideas, of innovation, of the ingenuity that has driven this industry from the very start.

The IT industry is too young, too new, for us to get nostalgic about the way things used to be. But I do want to read you something that dates back to the Comdex show of 1984, the year that vendors offered a low-cost laser printer – for only \$5,000. (That was nothing. A couple of years earlier, they went for \$30,000.) Here's what one magazine had to say in 1984: "Comdex," it wrote, "has come to serve as a compass from which . . . the direction of the microcomputer business can be accurately [read]."

That was 16 years ago. The same can be said today, but with even greater confidence. As hardware displays gave way to software demos, and as entire industries went online, your companies have not just marketed new trends – you've set them. This year, I want to challenge you to set another new trend. I hope you'll devote more of your time and technology to closing the digital divide. I hope you'll invest more of your ideas and energy in the new, untapped markets in our midst. For your businesses, it's the smart thing to do. For America, it's the right thing to do.

This is a moment of unprecedented prosperity and promise for our nation. We have the strongest economy in our history; more than 21 million new jobs; the smallest welfare rolls in a generation; the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years; the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record.

Yet as our new economy surges ahead in this new century, we know there are people and places being left behind. Over the past year, on my New Markets tours, I have traveled to many of them – from the hills and hollows of Appalachia to the heart of the Mississippi Delta; from Englewood, in inner-city Chicago, to Pine Ridge, at the outer reaches of Indian Country – shining a spotlight on opportunity where it is too often overlooked. I have seen, in every one of these places, not just poverty but great promise. I have seen the power of public-private

partnerships to create hope, create jobs, create wealth and opportunity – for the people who live there and the businesses that invest there.

Yesterday, I began this third New Markets tour in East Palo Alto, California – because I wanted our nation to know that even in Silicon Valley, there are many Americans who have yet to enter the Information Age. Also yesterday, on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, we saw the vast distances that must be overcome – literally as well as figuratively – in building an information infrastructure that encompasses all of America.

The challenge is clear; the stakes are high; and the choice is in our hands. We can use these new technologies to expand the circle of opportunity wider than ever before. Or we can, instead, allow the digital divide to widen along the lines of education, income, region, and race. By the same token, we can accelerate the most powerful engine of growth and wealth the world has ever known, or we can allow that engine to stall. As any economics textbook will tell you, technology will continue to drive growth upward – only so long as technology continues to spread outward, reaching into every sector of our economy and every corner of our country.

The very information technology that drives our new economy can also give us the tools to ensure that no one gets left behind. If we work together to close the digital divide, we can empower every family and community, every school and every business. We can move millions of Americans from the margins of our economy to the mainstream. We can move more people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in history.

Like all Americans, you've got a big stake in this effort and in our shared success. Now, more than ever, businesses like yours are looking to expand, looking not just for new markets and new customers but for new workers. Whether your company is creating information technology – and that's all of you – or just using information technology – and that's just about everybody else – you need the highly skilled workers to do it. That demand is great and it's growing. You've never had a better incentive to search several exits off the beaten path, or to give a chance to someone who might otherwise go undiscovered.

Everywhere I've gone this week, and on my previous New Markets trips, I've met intelligent, able Americans, eager for opportunity. Like the young people who join us today, they demonstrate that drive and dreams are distributed equally in this country. These Americans don't want handouts. They want jobs. They want the high-tech, high-wage jobs that your companies create by the thousands.

So our imperative is clear: If we want to tap the potential of new markets, we must tap the potential of new workers. We must close the digital divide.

I have often said on these trips that government works best as a partner to the private sector, as a catalyst that helps create the climate for investment and opportunity. That is the philosophy behind my New Markets Initiative: using tax incentives to leverage private-sector investment, to get capital flowing to people and neighborhoods it might otherwise miss.

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Now... I hope that
I ask

This innovative approach is one, I believe, that members of both parties can agree upon. Last November, here in Chicago, Speaker Hastert and I joined together at Englewood High School and agreed to work together on a bipartisan legislative initiative to spur investment in America's new markets. We are making progress on that pledge. The House took an important step last week toward creating American Private Investment Companies, something I proposed in last year's State of the Union Address. APICs, which are modeled on our successful Overseas Private Investment Corporation, will spur as much as \$1.5 billion in new private investment in hard-pressed communities, urban and rural. I know that Speaker Hastert, along with other members of Congress, is joining you at Comdex; and I want to thank him again for his leadership in moving this legislation forward.

APICs are part of our comprehensive plan to give businesses the same incentives to invest in America's new markets as they have to invest in new markets overseas. These are the same sort of incentives that will help narrow the digital divide. My budget creates \$2 billion in these tax incentives – even as it invests \$150 million for training all new teachers in how to use technology effectively in the classroom; even as it provides \$100 million to help create 1,000 community technology centers across the country.

But this is only the start. Two weeks ago, I issued a National Call to Action for Digital Opportunity – to enlist the support of businesses like yours, as well as government, community groups, schools, foundations, and volunteers. More than 400 organizations have signed on – and I hope you will do the same. Together, we can bring cutting-edge technology into every school and every home. Together, we can build a strong workforce for the future – ensuring that our economy, your businesses, and the skills of your workforce, continue to grow.

I am encouraged by the response we have already received, the commitments that many of you have already made. I would like to highlight just a few. Today, I am pleased to announce the creation of more than 200 new Community Technology Centers, and the substantial expansion of more than 100 existing ones. This increase in federal funding will leverage over \$42 million in state, local, and corporate commitments; giving more Americans in more hard-pressed communities the access they need to computers, the Internet, and technology training.

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Street-Level Youth Media, on the West Side of Chicago, is one of those community technology centers. The young people who joined me on the tour today spend a lot of after-school hours at the center, where they have access to the Internet and a whole lot more: classes in computers and website design; video and audio production; and opportunities to turn those skills into real work, for real wages.

I am also pleased to announce that we will double, by the end of next year, the number of Neighborhood Network Centers in public housing – to 1,000 all across America. These computer learning centers – the product of a public-private partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development – have already helped the residents of some of our poorest neighborhoods to make the move from welfare to work; to increase their earnings; and to start new businesses.

And to ensure that every new teacher in America knows how to use technology effectively in the classroom, the deans of more than 200 colleges and universities have signed a letter to me, pledging to join in that effort. These schools are holding themselves responsible for results, testing their own progress with a self-assessment tool designed by the CEO Forum on Education and Technology – a partnership that includes many forward-thinking companies represented here today.

Opening new markets, and closing the digital divide, represents a profound opportunity for business. It is a way to keep our record economic expansion growing with higher growth, higher wages, and low inflation. But it is more than that. It is a moral obligation as well.

I want every corporate leader here, every entrepreneur, every engineer, to help us seize that opportunity, and meet that responsibility to our children, and to our nation. Plug into this effort. Sign on; sign up. Make it your mission, too, to train new teachers in the technologies you create; make sure their schools have the modern computers, high-speed Internet connections; and high-quality educational software our children need to succeed. Expand your internships: go out and find the students who might not otherwise find you. Put your best minds behind the effort to empower our people, giving them the tools and training to lift themselves out of poverty.

I believe this is in your power. And I know it is in our interest – all of you, all of us, all Americans. If Comdex is still a compass for the direction of this industry, then let us, together, chart a new course – our sights fixed firmly on the horizon of what we can achieve. Thank you.

The reason I came here today
I want to talk directly
to you
grow even
better even – united
we can't do it w/ your help

2 very basic goals

1) every school is truly plugged in
– that means ... A, B, C

2) home

What can we do?
[4th penultimate]

But overwhelming

Our schools have to be this way --
What can you do?

Content — Bob J.

When people are motivated,
– content challenge

1) schools

2) community
we can do more of these
ask yourself have we done
enough?

3) home

4) jobs — open the doors
put young people in the
schools

I'm going back - asking self what more I can do
I want you to do same

Fourth - ^{help inspire} get the communities that
work in to ~~get~~ ^{set} ~~organized~~ ^{passionate} ~~around~~ ^{about} the
issue. Forge grassroots partnerships
between business, ^{local} governments and
community-based organizations. Mobilize
the talent, the technology and the financial
resources that will be needed to
create digital opportunity for ~~the~~ all
Americans. Develop a comprehensive
approach that will bring technology
& the skills needed to use it to our
schools, ^{libraries,} communities, ^{centers} and homes.

Literacy Challenge, my budget creates \$2 billion in new tax incentives to bridge the digital divide. It provides \$150 million to train all new teachers to use technology in the classroom, and \$100 million to create technology centers in 1,000 communities across the country, by the end of next year.

Today, I am pleased to announce the creation of 214 Community Technology Centers this year alone, and the substantial expansion of 136 more. We'll expand investment in these centers by more than \$86 million, half of it from state, local, and corporate commitments. Not far from here, on the West Side of Chicago, is one of these centers. The young people I met today spend a lot of after-school hours there, at Street-Level Youth Media, where they can access the Internet and a whole lot more – classes in website design; projects in video production; and, most important, the chance to apply their skills in real work, for real wages.

I am also pleased to announce that we will double, by the end of next year, the number of Neighborhood Networks to 1,000. These computer learning centers – product of a public-private partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development – have already helped the residents of some of our poorest neighborhoods to make the move from welfare to work; to increase their earnings; and to start new businesses.

And to ensure that every new teacher in America can use technology effectively in the classroom, the deans of more than 200 colleges and universities have sent me a letter, pledging themselves to join in our effort. Their schools will hold themselves responsible for results, testing their progress with a self-assessment tool designed by the CEO Forum on Education and Technology – a forum that includes many forward-thinking companies represented here today.

But this is only a start. I want every person here, every entrepreneur, every engineer, to consider what you can do to help America seize this opportunity, and fulfill this fundamental obligation to our children and our future.

First, I hope you will support my National Call to Action, which I issued two weeks ago. Its basic goals are to provide 21st-century learning tools for every child in every school, and to create digital opportunity for every family and every community. I have called for businesses like yours to enlist in our effort – as well as schools, community groups, and volunteers. More than 400 organizations have already signed on. I hope you will join them.

But second, I want you to do more than sign a pledge ~~or a piece of paper~~. I want you to take action. Make sure our schools have modern computers and high-speed Internet connections; and high-quality educational software our children need to succeed. And train new teachers in the technologies you create. *to be as comfortable w. a computer as they are w. a chalkboard*
— particularly for low-income and minority

Third, so that today's students can become tomorrow's high-tech workers, I hope you will expand the internships you offer. And not just that – expand your pool of talent. *Go out and find the students who might not otherwise find you. Reach out to women & minorities and ~~low-income~~ young people from disadvantaged backgrounds that are*

Fourth, forge new partnerships – with local groups and local governments. Build this effort upward from the grassroots. You will empower people when you give them not just the tools but the training to lift themselves out of poverty – not just the access but the ability. Make that your mission.

we underrepresented in today's IT industry.

Encourage your employees to provide schools with the technical know-how to make the most of these new technologies.

Let me tell you why. I have come to Comdex because I want to talk to you directly. I have come to ask for your support. I have come to talk to you about the important choice we have before us – and to suggest what you can do to help America make the right choice. The technology you create, and the ideas you generate, help drive our new economy. They can also help ensure that no one gets left behind – moving millions of Americans from the economic margins to the mainstream, moving more people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in history.

So this is our choice: we can use these new technologies to widen the circle of opportunity; or we can allow the digital divide to widen along the lines of education, income, region, and race. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of wealth the world has ever known, or we can allow that engine to stall. As any economics textbook will tell you, technology will continue to drive growth upward – only as long as technology continues to spread outward, reaching into every sector of our economy and every corner of our country.

Our imperative is clear: We must open new markets and new opportunities; and we must close the digital divide. Because this is so strongly in our national interest, I am here to tell you what more we can do about it. And because this is so strongly in your interest, I am here to tell you what more you can do about it.

Like all Americans, you've got a big stake in our shared success. Now, more than ever, businesses like yours are looking to expand, looking not just for new markets and new customers but for new workers. Whether you're creating information technology – and that's all of you – or just using information technology – and that's just about everybody else – you need the highly skilled workers to do it. That demand is great and growing. Yesterday, in East Palo Alto, I took a look at the classifieds in the *San Jose Mercury News* and there were 10,000 high-tech jobs being advertised. You have never had a better incentive to search several exits off the beaten path, or to give a chance to someone who might otherwise go undiscovered.

On every one of my New Markets trips I have met intelligent, able Americans, eager for opportunity. Like the young people here today, they demonstrate that drive and dreams are distributed equally. These Americans don't want charity. They want opportunity. They want the high-tech, high-wage jobs that your companies create by the thousands.

How are we going to tap the potential of these new workers? By working together. I have often said that government works best as a partner to the private sector – as a catalyst that helps create the climate for investment and opportunity. That is the idea behind my New Markets Initiative: that tax incentives can leverage private-sector investment, can get capital flowing to people and neighborhoods it might otherwise miss.

It's an approach that should appeal to both parties. Last fall, Speaker Hastert and I came to Chicago and pledged to work together on a bipartisan initiative to spur investment in new markets. We are making progress on that pledge. The House took an important step last week toward creating American Private Investment Companies, which will spur as much as \$1.5 billion in new private investment in hard-pressed communities.

It's also a comprehensive approach – toward opening new markets and closing the digital divide. In addition to our \$2.25 billion e-rate initiative, and our \$450 million Technology

Draft 04/17/00 8:00pm
Jeff Shesol

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO COMDEX SPRING CONFERENCE
McCORMICK PLACE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
April 18, 2000**

Acknowledgments: Sec. Slater; FCC Chair Bill Kennard; Rev. Jackson; Gene Sperling; Maria Echaveste; Frederic Rosen, Chair & CEO of Key3Media; Jason Chudnofsky, Pres. & CEO of ZD Events; Director Tony Streit [*Stright*] & the young people from Street-Level Youth Media; members of Congress TBD

I am glad to be the first President to address this conference. Let me predict that I won't be the last. Over its 21 years, Comdex has become much more than a trade show for industry insiders. As I saw on my tour today, it's sort of an open celebration of ideas, of innovation, of the ingenuity that has driven this industry from the very start.

The IT industry is too young, too new, for us to get nostalgic about the way things used to be. But I do want to read you something that dates back to the Comdex show of 1984, the year that vendors offered a low-cost laser printer – for only \$5,000. (That was nothing. A couple of years earlier, they went for \$30,000.) Here's what one magazine had to say in 1984: "Comdex," it wrote, "has come to serve as a compass from which . . . the direction of the microcomputer business can be accurately [read]."

That was 16 years ago. The same can be said today, but with even greater confidence. Your companies have not just marketed new trends – you've set them. This year, I want to challenge you to set another new trend. I hope you'll devote more of your time and technology, more of your ideas and energy, to closing the digital divide – the growing gap between those who have the tools and skills and the motivation to succeed, and those who don't.

At the start of this new century, as our new economy surges forward, we know there are people and places being left behind. Over the past year, on my New Markets tours, I have traveled to many of them – from the hills and hollows of Appalachia to the heart of the Mississippi Delta; from Englewood, in inner-city Chicago, to Pine Ridge, at the outer reaches of Indian Country – shining a spotlight on opportunity where it is too often overlooked.

Yesterday, I began this third New Markets tour in East Palo Alto, California – because I wanted our nation to know that even in Silicon Valley, there are many Americans who have yet to enter the Information Age. Also yesterday, on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico, we saw the vast distances that must be overcome – literally as well as figuratively – in building an information infrastructure that encompasses all of America.

So – and let me pose this question bluntly – why am I here? After traveling to some of America's hardest-pressed places, why in the world have I come here, to Comdex, to meet with America's highest-powered, high-tech elite?

Draft 04/16/00 8:00pm
Jeff Shesol

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I know you will agree: we have barely touched the potential of what this technology can do or the people it can reach. Imagine if computers were as common as telephones are today. Imagine if [cable modems were as common as cable TV]. Imagine if every American not only had these tools but the skills – and the motivation – to use them. The very information technology that drives our new economy can also give us the tools to ensure that no one gets left behind.

If we work together to close the digital divide, we can empower every family and community, every school and every business. We can move millions of Americans from the margins of our economy to the mainstream. We can move more people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in history.

Like all Americans, you've got a big stake in this effort and in our shared success. Now, more than ever, businesses like yours are looking to expand, looking not just for new markets and new customers but for new workers. Whether your company is creating information technology – and that's all of you – or just using information technology – and that's just about everybody else – you need the highly skilled workers to do it. That demand is great and it's growing. You've never had a better incentive to search several exits off the beaten path, or to give a chance to someone who might otherwise go undiscovered.

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And to ensure that every new teacher in America knows how to use technology effectively in the classroom, the deans of more than 200 colleges and universities have signed a letter to me, pledging to join in that effort. These schools are holding themselves responsible for results, testing their own progress with a self-assessment tool designed by the CEO Forum on Education and Technology – a partnership that includes many forward-thinking companies represented here today.

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I believe this is in your power. And I know it is in our interest – all of you, all of us, all Americans. If Comdex is still a compass for the direction of this industry, then let us, together, chart a new course – our sights fixed firmly on the horizon of what we can achieve. Thank you.

Draft 04/14/00 6:00pm
Jeff Shesol

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