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DIGITAL DIVIDE DISABILITIES TRIP BRIEFING BOOK (9/21/2000) [1]

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**THE WHITE HOUSE
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR ECONOMIC POLICY**

GENE SPERLING



**Digital Divide Disabilities Trip Briefing Book
For the President's Trip to Flint, MI
September 21, 2000**

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.

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.

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.]

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 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.

Material for the September 21, 2000 Presidential Event “Creating Digital Opportunities for People with Disabilities” in Flint, Michigan

Tab A	1) Event Memo for the President’s speech at Mott Community College 2) Event Memo for the President’s tour of the Access Center of the “Disability Network” 3) Background Memorandum for the President on “Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities” 4) List of meet and greet participants
Tab B	President’s Remarks (to be provided by speech writing)
Tab C	Fact Sheet – “Next Stop on President Clinton’s “Digital Divide” Trip: Digital Opportunities for Americans With Disabilities – September 21, 2000”
Tab D	Fact Sheet – “Clinton-Gore Administration Accomplishments in Creating Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities – September 21, 2000”
Tab E	Fact Sheet – “The Importance of Creating Digital Opportunity for People with Disabilities – September 21, 2000”
Tab F	Fact Sheet – “The Clinton-Gore Administration Record to Help Close the Digital Divide – September 21, 2000”
Tab G	Open letter to the President from the Presidents of a number of leading research universities, agreeing to expand research and education on accessibility
Tab H	Open letter to the President from the CEOs pledging to adopt “best practices” on accessibility
Tab I	Executive Memorandum to create a task force to examine Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies
Tab J	Presidential Memorandum “Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design” July 25, 2000
Tab K	Press release “President Clinton and the First lady Commemorate the 10 th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)” July 26, 2000
Tab L	Department of Commerce Press Release “U.S. Commerce Secretary Mineta Urges “Digital Inclusion” as Nation Commemorates 10 th Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act”
Tab M	“Disability and the Digital Divide” by H. Stephen Kaye, <u>Disability Statistics Abstract</u> , July 2000/Number 22

Tab Mc	Statement of Judy Brewer before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on the Constitution, February 9, 2000 on Web Accessibility
Tab N	Universal Information Access on the WWW and World Wide Web Consortium (W ₃ C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)
Tab O	"How the Internet is Improving the Lives of Americans With Disabilities" by Humphrey Taylor, The Harris Poll #30, June 7 2000
Tab P	Budget justification of the Administration's FY2001 request for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) – Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Title II (\$100 M) and Assistive Technology Act of 1998 Title I and Title III (\$41 M)
Tab Q	Description of NIDRR's Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Information Technology Access, NIDRR's Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Access to Telecommunications and an article on the Centers
Tab R	Summary of Assistive Tech Act of 1998/ How computers are accessible along with descriptions of some common aids
Tab S	Product data sheets on commercially available assistive technology– eyegaze computer system, screen magnifier, screen reader, close captioning for web multi-media, hearing aid compatible cell phones, wireless services for those with disabilities, Braille and speak note-taker, Braille embosser printer, and Adobe enhancing the functions of its Acrobat software and the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF).
Tab T	Questions and Answers on Provisions in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 with regard to disability access and assistive technologies for communications
Tab U	Questions and Answers on the 1998 Amendments to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Included in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998
Tab V	Microsoft's Accessibility Policy as an example of corporate accessibility policy
Tab W	The 2000 National Organization on Disabilities/Harris Survey of Americans With Disabilities
Tab X	Federal Agencies that support those Americans with disabilities (National Council on Disabilities, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, ACCESS Board)

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Divider Title: _____ A

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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September 20, 2000

**SPEECH AT MOTT COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON
THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES**

DATE: September 21, 2000
TIME: 2:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Ballenger Field House, Mott Community
College, Flint, Michigan
FROM: Gene Sperling, Beth Cahill

I. PURPOSE

To highlight your Administration's efforts to bridge the digital divide for Americans with disabilities.

II. BACKGROUND

Mott Community College is a leader in the Flint area in helping people with disabilities lead more independent and rewarding lives:

- The college is building a new \$34 million high-tech Regional Technology Center in Flint. The money was raised through a local bond issue of \$17 million and grant from the State of Michigan. The Regional Technology Center will provide education and training in state-of-the-art manufacturing and simulation technology and offer full access for individuals with disabilities as well as training in the latest assistive technology. The center is also considering new curriculum and R&D on disability related mobility technology.
- The college is a partner – along with Disability Network and the US Department of Education -- in the Assistive Technology Access Center you visited earlier today.
- The college is also a partner in Flint's Broome Community Center, a converted middle school that is now fully accessible to people with disabilities, which offers employment services, training and counseling to Flint residents with and without disabilities. The Broome Center provides training in cutting-edge assistive technology.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Speaking Program:

- Mayor Woodrow Stanley
- Judy Brewer, Director of the Web Accessibility Initiative, W3C
- Secretary Norman Mineta
- Karla Hudson, real person, vision-impaired

IV. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Arrive Mott Community College
- Greeters:

- Lenore Croudy, Chair of Board of Trustees, Mott Community College
- Dr. John Snell, Vice Chair of Board of Trustees, Mott Community College
- Father James Bettendorf, Secretary of Board of Trustees, Mott Comm. College

- All proceed to holding-room
- Off-stage announcement of speakers
- Mayor Woodrow Stanley makes brief remarks and introduces Judy Brewer
- Judy Brewer makes brief remarks and introduces Sec. Norman Mineta
- Sec. Norman Mineta makes brief remarks and introduces Karla Hudson
- Sec. Mineta escorts Karla Hudson to podium
- Karl Hudson makes brief remarks and introduces YOU
- YOU escort Karla back to her seat, then make remarks
- YOU work ropeline
- YOU proceed to holding room for Meet-and-Greet with about 20 guests
- YOU leave Meet-and-Greet and have photo taken in hallway with drivers and police
- Depart Mott Community College via motorcade en route Bishop International Airport

V. PRESS COVERAGE

Open press.

VI. REMARKS

Provided by speechwriting.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 20, 2000

'00 SEP 20 PM9:14

**TOUR OF THE ACCESS CENTER
OF THE "DISABILITY NETWORK"**

DATE: September 21, 2000
TIME: 12:55 p.m. – 1:55 p.m.
LOCATION: Access Center of the Disability Network
Flint, Michigan
FROM: Gene Sperling, Beth Cahill

I. PURPOSE

You will observe a demonstration of cutting edge technology that helps people with disabilities, highlighting the importance of bridging the digital divide.

II. BACKGROUND

The Disability Network is a nonprofit, nonresidential center designed to help people with disabilities lead more independent, rewarding lives. Services include independent living skills training, information about and referral to housing, transportation and educational programs, and peer and family support and guidance. The Disability Network is staffed and managed by people with disabilities.

You will participate in the grand opening of the Disability Network's new Access Center, a collaboration with Flint's Mott Community College (where you will give a speech later in the day) and the US Department of Education's Community Technology Centers program, one of your digital divide initiatives. The new center aims to help bridge the digital divide for people with disabilities by teaching clients to use state-of-the-art assistive technology. I

The center will offer a newly developed Assistive Technology certification program, not available anywhere else in the United States. To teach the courses, the Disability Network will hire individuals with disabilities and train them to become certified assistive technology experts to meet the growing demand for such specialists in the workplace and classroom. Instructors will also teach design of websites that are accessible to users with audial, visual or movement disabilities.

The technologies demonstrated for you today include:

- **EyeGaze**, by LC Technologies, a communication and control system for people with complex physical disabilities, such as Lou Gehrig's disease. 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. By looking at control keys displayed on the screen, a person can synthesize speech, control the environment (lights, appliances, etc.), operate a telephone, run a computer, or access the internet. This technology will be demonstrated by Nancy Cleveland of LC Technologies.
- **Jaws for Windows (JFW)** is a screen reader that speaks everything on the computer screen for a person who is blind. It can read everything from web pages and email to Excel spread sheets. The user can also read the screen on a refreshable Braille pad. This technology will be demonstrated by Sharon Regal of the Visually Impaired Center in Flint and Luke Zelle of the Disability Network.
- **Electronic Books (DAISY)**, from the American Foundation for the Blind and Time-Warner. 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 his own bookmarks and study notes. This technology helps people who are sight- or hearing-impaired. It can also help the illiterate or those trying to learn a new language in that they can hear the text on the screen. This technology will be demonstrated by Janina Sajka of the American Federation for the Blind.
- **Distance-learning.** The Access Center is also linked to Mott Community College's (MCC) main campus for tutorials and distance-learning opportunities through the Internet and video conferencing. As ever more colleges and universities offer distance-learning, clients at the center will have at their fingertips a universe of higher-educational courses from which to choose. The specific technology you will observe today is a product of the 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. 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 technology will be demonstrated by Judy Brewer, Director of the Web Accessibility Initiative.

The Disability Network is not the only reason why Flint is known as a city accessible to people with disabilities. Flint's Mayor Woodrow Stanley, who will be on hand, recently created a city-wide Access Council to educate the community and employers on the advantages of hiring and serving citizens with disabilities; honor with a large "Access Flint" decal businesses that hire, service and are accessible to individuals with disabilities; ensure vigorous enforcement of disability-related building codes; and create a resource directory and website of local services for people with disabilities.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Pre-Event Briefing Aboard AF1:

- Sec. Norman Mineta
- Maria Echaveste
- Gene Sperling
- Mickey Ibarra
- Christine Stanek
- Tom Kalil
- Jonathan Young

Event Participants:

- Mike Zelly, Executive Director of Disability Network
- Secretary Norman Mineta
- Nancy Cleveland of LC Technologies, who will demonstrate EyeGaze
- Sharon Regal of the Visually Impaired Center in Flint and Luke Zelley of the Disability Network, who will demonstrate Jaws for Windows
- Janina Sajka of the American Federation for the Blind, who will demonstrate Electronic Books
- Judy Brewer, Director of the Web Accessibility Initiative, W3C, who will demonstrate distance-learning

IV. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Depart airport via motorcade en route to the Disability Network
- Arrive at the Disability Network, greeted by its Executive Director, Mike Zelly
- Zelly delivers brief welcoming remarks
- All proceed to Disability Network's new Assistive Technology Access Center
- YOU, Zelly, and Sec. Mineta observe a demonstration of the technologies listed above
- Depart en route Mott Community College

V. PRESS COVERAGE

Expanded pool press (i.e., pool, local and specialty media).

VI. REMARKS

None.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 2000

00 SEP 20 PM 8:12

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: GENE SPERLING
TOM KALIL

RE: BACKGROUND ON DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES

Summary: Tomorrow, you are scheduled to do an event in Flint, Michigan that will focus on closing the digital divide and creating digital opportunity for people with disabilities. This is a continuation of the digital divide trip that you launched in April in East Palo Alto. This memo will provide you with some background on this topic.

Importance of the issue:

In your State of the Union, you noted that America had an important choice to make as we entered the Information Age. We can either use IT to widen the circle of opportunity, or we can allow unequal access to IT to further polarize American society along the existing lines of income, education level, race, geography, and disability. The disability community believes that information technology offers a great deal of promise. It could increase their ability to work, expand their access to the growing universe of electronic information, and allow them to lead more independent lives. On the other hand, if information and communications technologies are not designed to be accessible to people with disabilities, they could be further isolated from the economic and social mainstream. The ability of people with disabilities to afford these technologies is also a big issue, especially given that people with disabilities have lower incomes.

The following statistics illustrate the magnitude of the challenge:

- There are 54 million Americans with disabilities.
- People with disabilities are half as likely to have a computer as people without disabilities (23.9 percent vs. 51.7 percent)
- The Internet is much more likely to improve the quality of life for adults with disabilities than people without disabilities. 48 percent of people with disabilities believe that the Internet has significantly improved their quality of life compared to just 27 percent of adults without disabilities.
- Only 31 percent of the 17.3 million Americans with severe disabilities ages 21-64 are employed.

Goals for the trip

After working closely with the disability community and the private sector, we decided to establish 5 overall goals for this trip:

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

Specific deliverables

Below are some of the specific deliverables that you will be announcing in your speech or that we will be including in the material that we release to the press.

- 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.
- You will direct your Cabinet to create a task force to examine Medicare/Medicaid coverage of assistive technology. This review is particularly important because the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act allows people with disabilities to maintain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage after they return to work. *(A copy of the PD is attached at Tab E.)*
- 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, such as a project in North Carolina that will give 300 blind and visually impaired students of all ages computer and Internet skills. You will also be calling on Congress to reauthorize the Americorps program, including a new "E-Corps" that would focus on the digital divide.
- The Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will provide 5 years of funding to the Web Accessibility Initiative to help ensure that the Web is accessible to people with disabilities. Judy Brewer, the director of this project, will be travelling with you.

- The Department of Education will fund an initiative by the National Center for Accessible Media and industry to develop standards for accessible online learning.
- The Michigan-based 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 commit to making free desktop software (an alternative to Windows) accessible to people with disabilities.
- The President's Committee on Employment of 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.

Your record on this issue

You have an excellent record on this issue:

- The Telecommunications Act of 1996 has been called the "ADA for the Information Age" because it requires that telecommunications equipment be accessible to people with disabilities.
- The Workforce Investment Act includes amendments that require that when federal agencies develop, procure or use electronic and information technology -- that it is accessible to people with disabilities. Because the federal government is a large purchaser of IT, this will encourage the private sector to devote more resources to this issue.
- Your FY2001 budget proposes a 17 percent increase in the Department of Education's budget for assistive technology - for research and development and loan programs.
- During the 10th anniversary of the ADA, you directed the science and technology agencies to identify priority areas for the development of assistive technologies, and to transfer technology so that they can be commercialized.

Meet and greet participants (OPL/NEC/Political):

Carl Augusto

President, American Foundation for the Blind

Brent Betit

Executive Vice President, Landmark College, Putney, Vermont

Judy Brewer

Director, Web Accessibility Initiative

Patrick Cannon

Executive Director, Michigan Commission for the Blind

James Clark

Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, NCR Corporation

Steve Guengerich

Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Agillion, Inc.

Janice Merle Hertz

Director, Accessible Technology Group at Microsoft

I. King Jordan (and wife as interpreter)

President, Gallaudet University

Peter Korn

Sun Accessibility Team, Sun Microsystems

Pamela Loving

President and CEO, Career Alliance

Susan MacGregor

Michigan School System

Brian Chase Norman

Director, External Affairs, Ameritech

Robert Stack

President and CEO, Community Options

Tom Svitkovich

Local County Superintendent



Maja Thomas

Executive Director, Time-Warner Audio Books

Greg Vanderheiden

Director, Trace Research and Development Center

Bill White

President, Mott Foundation

Cecelia Winkle

Principal, Michigan School for the Deaf

Mike Zelle

Executive Director, Disability Network



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Final 9/20/00 11:30 p.m.
John Pollack

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
CREATING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
FLINT, MICHIGAN
September 21, 2000**

Thank you, Karla Hudson. Thank you for your commitment to others, and to building a better future. A future with more opportunity for *all* Americans.

Let me also recognize some others joining us today: Secretary Mineta, my National Economic Advisor Gene Sperling, Mayor Stanley, Judy Brewer from the Web Consortium's Accessibility Initiative; Pamela Loving from the Career Alliance; Michael Zelley from the Disability Network; my good friend Bill White of the Mott Foundation; and of course, our host Dr. Shaink (shank) – the President of Mott Community College. Thank you for your leadership, and for making this day possible. I'd also like to recognize Vice President Gore, who has worked by my side for eight years now to make the promise of America real for everyone.

Looking back, I think this is my fourth trip to Flint; I'm beginning to feel right at home here. Mayor Stanley welcomed me when I first came in 1992, and next year, when I'm out of office, he'll *still* be mayor. I want to know what his secret is.

This is a fortunate time for our country. We are enjoying the longest economic expansion in history. We've created 22 million new jobs. Inflation is the lowest in a generation. Home ownership is at a record high. Crime has fallen eight years running, and more students than ever before are heading on to college.

Together, we are building a better America – and nobody has worked harder, against tougher odds, than the people of Flint.

This community has done a remarkable job retooling for the new century, and has made a lot of progress. But we know we can do better. Not everyone has been able to share in America's economic renaissance. All of us know people and places that are at risk of being left behind. And that includes millions of Americans with significant disabilities who want to go to work, but whose path is blocked.

The 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."

In America, we owe every citizen the chance to get an education, work hard, and reach for their dreams. That's why I'm doing everything I can to keep expanding the circle of opportunity. As the pace of technological change accelerates, we cannot afford to leave anybody stranded on the other side of a digital divide. Let's seize this moment of prosperity to guarantee equal opportunity for every American.

The Vice President and I have worked for nearly eight years to break down the barriers that hold people back. In negotiating the Telecommunications Act of 1996, we insisted that people with disabilities have full access to the telephone equipment and services that most people take for granted. In 1998, we pushed through the Workforce Investment Act, requiring that any information technology the federal government buys be accessible to people with disabilities. And in 1999 I was proud to sign the "Work Incentives Improvement Act," which will enable Americans with disabilities to retain their Medicaid or Medicare coverage when they go to work, and provide more choices for job training.

Now that we've broken down some of the barriers, it's time to give people the tools they need to take advantage of new opportunities – especially in cyberspace. Every day, we are becoming more and more an information-based economy. This presents us with amazing new possibilities. New information technologies mean that a person with a disability, such as Stephen Hawking, can still become one of the world's top experts in astrophysics.

But if we want people with disabilities to access and use the Information Superhighway, we need to build some 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 income, have easy and affordable access to the Internet.

I visited America's newest Community Technology Center just this afternoon, right here in Flint. It's a partnership between the Department of Education, Mott Community College and the non-profit Disability Network. It focuses on empowering people with disabilities to access the Internet and learn computer skills. You should see some of this technology. It translates Web pages aloud for people who are blind or visually impaired. It provides captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing. And it enables people with significant physical disabilities to control a computer through eye movement and brain waves.

This technology has tremendous potential to empower people. I know a man in North Carolina named Joe Martin, who has Lou Gehrig's Disease. Although he can't walk or talk or use his hands, his eyes provide a window to the world. With "Eyegaze" technology, he can look at a computer screen and type away, just using his eyes. 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, chat with his wife and friends, and write a compelling book about his life.

These kinds of innovations are going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives, especially as we incorporate them into mainstream technology. Here in Genesee County, employers can't find enough people to fill all the technical jobs. Jobs that pay \$20 an hour. If we want to keep growing the economy, we have to make information technology more accessible, so that people with disabilities can enter the workforce.

Americans with disabilities deserve a fair shot at the American Dream, and that means all of us have to help bridge the digital divide that holds them back and shortchanges our progress. Today I'm proud to announce several major public and private commitments that move us in that direction.

First, 45 CEOs of American high-tech companies have pledged to make their products more accessible to people with disabilities. That means training their employees to develop new accessible software, hardware, and services.

Second, 25 of the nation's leading research universities have committed to helping us provide equal access to information. This will include new coursework for engineering majors, and new tenure-track faculty positions to address these challenges.

Third, I'm pleased to announce that Flint's very own C.S. Mott Foundation will support these goals by funding a blue-ribbon task force, led by the Disability Network, to figure out how to make this new technology more affordable.

Fourth, I am directing my Cabinet to explore ways of enhancing Medicare and Medicaid, to help people with disabilities pay for technologies that enable them to live and work independently in their communities.

Fifth, I am announcing grants totaling \$4 million from the Department of Education to the Web Accessibility Initiative and the National Center for Accessible Media. These investments will help ensure that people with disabilities can tap into the World Wide Web, and make the most of on-line learning.

Finally, I am proud to announce that AmeriCorps is awarding \$9 million in grants that will put 1,200 volunteers into schools and communities, teaching underprivileged kids and students with disabilities the skills they need to take advantage of the Internet. 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 possibility.

Let me add here, that I have received a letter signed by 49 governors, calling on Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and the other community programs administered by the Corporation for National Service, including a new E-Corps program to bridge the digital divide. I urge Congress to heed this call.

Bridging the digital divide is not only the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do. A decade ago, when people were debating the Americans with Disabilities Act, some critics said it would be too expensive to make public facilities accessible, to put in curb-cuts, handrails and signs in Braille.

They were wrong. Today, we take those amenities for granted. Since we've torn down those old barriers, more than a million Americans with disabilities have entered the workforce. And if we build new on-ramps to the Information Superhighway, people with disabilities will help us build an even stronger America, and finally share in the fundamental American promise of independence.

A century ago, visionaries here in Flint harnessed the potential of new technology to build the world's largest auto company. Their success gave us a mobility and freedom that

reshaped our economic and physical landscape. Today, at the dawn of an information age, we have the potential to give millions of people freedom in cyberspace. If we succeed in this endeavor, we will again transform the economic landscape, and forever reshape the terrain of human potential.

Thank you.

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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.

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.

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Divider Title: _____ **D**

**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.

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Divider Title: _____ E

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.]

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Divider Title: _____ **F**

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.

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Divider Title: _____ **G**

September 20, 2000

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

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

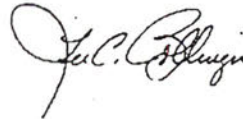
- Encourage our faculty who are developing cutting-edge applications of IT to consider accessibility concerns.

Thank you for your leadership in this important area.

Sincerely,



President Richard Atkinson
University of California System



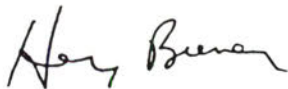
President Lee C. Bollinger
University of Michigan



President David Baltimore
California Institute of Technology



President William R. Brody
The Johns Hopkins University



President Henry S. Bienen
Northwestern University



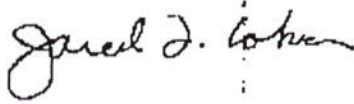
President Carol A. Cartwright
Kent State University



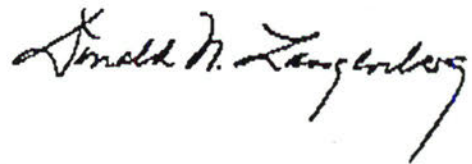
President Sheila E. Blumstein
Brown University



President G. Wayne Clough
Georgia Institute of Technology



President Jared L. Cohon
Carnegie Mellon University



President Donald N. Langenberg
University of System Maryland



President Scott S. Cowen
Tulane University



President Francis L. Lawrence
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey



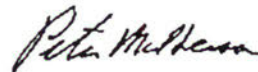
President Larry R. Faulkner
The University of Texas at Austin



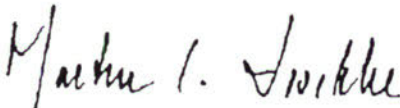
President Katharine C. Lyall
University of Wisconsin System



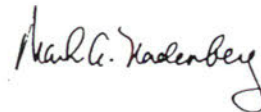
Chancellor Robert Hemenway
The University of Kansas



President Peter McPherson
Michigan State University



President Martin C. Jischke
Purdue University



Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg
University of Pittsburgh



President William E. Kirwan
The Ohio State University



President Charles W. Steger
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University



President James J. Stukel
University of Illinois



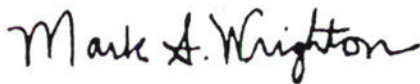
President Charles M. Vest
Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Chancellor David Ward
University of Wisconsin-Madison



Chancellor James H. Woodward
University of North Carolina at Charlotte



Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton
Washington University in St. Louis

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Divider Title: _____ **H**

AN OPEN LETTER ON ACCESSIBILITY FROM TECHNOLOGY EXECUTIVES

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

September 21, 2000

Dear Mr. President:

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 54 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,

John Warnock
CEO
Adobe Systems, Inc.

Meg Whitman
President & CEO
eBay, Inc.

Dr. Irwin M. Jacobs
Chairman of the Board
Qualcomm

Stephen M. Case
Chairman & CEO
America Online, Inc.

Leo J. Hindery, Jr.
CEO
Global Crossing

Scott A. McNealy
Chairman & CEO
Sun Microsystems, Inc.

C. Michael Armstrong
Chairman & CEO
AT&T

Carly S. Fiorina
President & CEO
Hewlett-Packard Company

Eric A. Benhamou
Chairman & CEO
3Com Corporation

Duane Ackerman
Chairman & CEO
BellSouth

Rob Burgess
Chairman & CEO
Macromedia, Inc.

James C. Morgan
Chairman & CEO
Applied Materials, Inc.

Michael D. Capellas
President & CEO
Compaq Computer Corp.

Steve Ballmer
CEO
Microsoft Corporation

Donna Dubinsky
CEO
Handspring

John Keane
Chairman & CEO
Keane, Inc.

Peter Hering
President
PST, Inc.

Amardeep Lamba
President
Absolute Solutions, Inc.

Larry L. Petersen
President
Advanced Network
Technologies, Inc.

David Lane
General Partner
Alpine Technology
Ventures

Mark Hill
President
Baker Hill Corp.

David Westin
President & CEO
Channel Automation, Inc.

Hani MN Alaouie
President
Dearborn Technical
Institute

Scott A. Martin
President
diCarta, Corp.

Paul Lippe
CEO
e-SKOLAR

Nick Grouf
CEO & Founder
PeoplePC, Inc.

Brad Beckman
CEO
JTBS, Inc.

Curt M. Vinson
President
Lyme Computer Systems

Lalit J. Chabria
President
Micropower Business
Solutions

Marc Ostrofsky
President
Multimedia Venture
Partners

Lars Nyberg
Chairman & CEO
NCR Corporation

George F. Adam, Jr.
Chairman & CEO
NEON New Era Networks

Rick Dutta
CEO
Nexgenix

Tim O'Reilley
Founder
O'Reilley & Associates

Jimmy Edwards
President & CEO
Premier Computing
Training

Bob Young
Chairman
Red Hat, Inc.

Lucia Klebar
President
ProMentor

LaWanda Armstrong
President & CEO
QuesTech
Communications

Ariel Kleckner
President & Founder
Red Gorilla

Sterling Ledet
President
Sterling Ledet &
Associates, Inc.

Gregory M. Avis
Managing Partner
Summit Partners

Frank J. Ponzio, Jr.
President & Founder
Symbolic Systems, Inc.

Paul Okoye Chukwudi
President & CEO
Synergistic Software
Solutions

William M. Nelson
CEO
Will Nelson Computer
Services, Inc.

Arthur R. Rippey
President
World Technology
Computer Learning
Center, Inc.

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Divider Title: _____ I

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 useful to 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 towards 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.

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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.

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TOKYO -
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PRESIDENT CLINTON AND THE FIRST LADY COMMEMORATE THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT
Announcing New Action to Expand Employment Opportunities and
Ensure Equality for Individuals With Disabilities
July 26, 2000

Today, in an event at the FDR Memorial, President Clinton joined by the First Lady and leaders of the disability community, will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and take new action to further the goals of the ADA by: increasing Federal employment opportunities for people with disabilities; ensuring that Federal agencies establish effective procedures for addressing reasonable accommodation requests and that federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination; and reducing the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work. The President will also announce his intention to work with the Congress in the context of an overall budget framework to enact legislation that builds on the success of the Work Incentives Improvement Act by allowing children with disabilities to continue their Medicaid coverage even if their parents have returned to work. Finally, the President will unveil the Access America for People with Disabilities website created to provide quick access to services and other resources for people with disabilities and their families. In addition, the First Lady will announce a series of initiatives to improve and increase opportunities for young people with disabilities to successfully transition to work and achieve independence. Yesterday, Vice President Gore announced a number of initiatives to provide home- and community-based options for people with disabilities who frequently have no choice but institutionalization. These announcements build on the Clinton/Gore Administration's commitment to advancing the rights of people with disabilities as full participants in all of society and preserving the spirit and intent of the ADA.

ASSISTING DISABLED SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE WORKING OR WANT TO GO TO WORK. The President's announcements reflect the ADA's focus on helping individuals with disabilities to fully participate in the workforce by reducing the barriers that Social Security beneficiaries face when they return to work.

-- Automatically adjusting the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level for individuals with disabilities. The Administration proposes to encourage additional disabled individuals to return to work with enhanced security by increasing the SGA levels to reflect the annual increases in the national average wage index. Since the beginning of the Social Security disability program in 1956, there have been no regularly scheduled increases in SGA. Last year, the Administration increased the amount that Social Security disability beneficiaries can earn - from \$500 to \$700 per month - and continue to receive their benefits. Each year, approximately 400,000 disability beneficiaries participate in the workforce. Many hesitate to work because they cannot afford to give up critical benefits.

-- Increase the amount of monthly earnings that count during a trial work period for Social Security beneficiaries who go to work. This increase will encourage beneficiaries with disabilities to contribute their talent and energy to the workforce and test their ability to maintain a level of work activity without affecting their disability benefits by increasing from \$200 to \$530 the minimum amount of monthly earnings that count toward a monthly work period. In the future, the amount will be automatically adjusted based on any annual increases in the national average wage index.

INCREASING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. The President will issue an

Executive Order calling on Federal agencies to hire 100,000 people with disabilities over a five-year period. This ambitious commitment exceeds current hiring trends by 60 percent, reflecting this Administration's strong commitment to making the Federal government a model employer by recruiting a diverse and well-qualified workforce. The President believes that the Federal government is ready to meet this challenge. This Executive Order calls on agencies to recruit individuals with disabilities for the full range of levels and occupations in the Federal government. The President will also direct Federal agencies to establish effective procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees and job applicants with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way a job is performed that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Although many individuals with disabilities can apply for and perform jobs without any reasonable accommodations, workplace barriers - whether physical or procedural - may keep others from performing jobs that they could do with some form of accommodation. Finally, to harness the power of new technologies to promote employment of people with significant disabilities, the President will call on Federal agencies that already operate customer service centers to identify positions that could be relocated to home-based or off-site facilities. If the agencies determine that it is feasible and appropriate to establish home-based positions, they are then required to develop a plan and guidelines that encourage the recruitment and employment of individuals with disabilities for such positions.

RENEWING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THAT FEDERAL PROGRAMS ARE FREE FROM DISABILITY-BASED DISCRIMINATION. The President will direct all Federal agencies to engage in a plan to ensure that today's Federal programs are free from disability-based discrimination, using specific steps designed by the Department of Justice and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to reach this important goal. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the ADA, we should renew our commitment to ensure that people with disabilities have equal employment opportunities within the Federal government and are fully able to participate in all Federal government programs.

ACCESS AMERICA FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WEBSITE. In keeping with President Clinton and Vice President Gore's vision of using information technology to increase and improve customer service, the President announced a new website, Access America for People with Disabilities - www.disAbility.gov. - that will serve as a "one-stop" electronic link to an enormous range of useful information for people with disabilities and their families. The website contains information relating to children and youth; employment, self employment, and entrepreneurship; transportation; health care and long term services and supports; choice and self-determination; recreation and travel; civil rights and protections; college, adult and vocational education; housing; technology; income supports; tax credits and deductions; disability statistics; and emergency preparedness. ANNOUNCING SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION TO INCREASE ACCESS TO MEDICAID FOR WORKING FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN. Today, the President will applaud the efforts of members of Congress to pass the Grassley-Kennedy-Sessions-Waxman Family Opportunity Act of 2000 (S. 2274 and HR 4825), sponsored by a bipartisan majority in the Senate and a growing coalition in the House. This bill, which is the next logical step beyond the Jeffords-Kennedy Work Incentives Improvement Act, creates a new Medicaid buy-in option and will help thousands of children with disabilities who lose their Medicaid coverage because of increased family income due to employment. It will also include a time-limited demonstration that extends Medicaid coverage to children who have a disabling condition that, without health care coverage, would cause them to become so severely disabled as to be eligible for SSI. The President will announce that he will work with the Congress to enact legislation that achieves these goals in the

context of a fiscally responsible budget framework.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES. The First Lady will announce a series of steps to help young people successfully transition from education to employment including:

-- Helping to bridge the transition from education to employment for students with disabilities. Young people with disabilities face enormous challenges when transitioning from education to employment. The First Lady will announce the Administration's plan to increase the amount that students who receive SSI can earn while continuing to receive the important protection SSI provides. The Administration will increase the maximum monthly earned income exclusion for students who receive Supplemental Security Income from \$400 to \$1,290 and the yearly exclusion from \$1,620 to \$5,200. The Administration is proposing to automatically adjust these amounts thereafter based on any annual increases in the cost-of-living index.

-- Working with youth to reach adult employment: the youth to work initiative. Recognizing that starting early is key to helping adults with disabilities gain employment skills and thrive in the workplace, the First Lady will unveil a new interagency Youth to Work Initiative. This Initiative would be created by amending the Executive Order that established the Presidential Taskforce on Employment of Adults with Disabilities to focus the mission on the important issue of helping young people make the transition from school to work. Youth with disabilities who want to enter the workforce face many barriers to employment, including low educational attainment, as well as low educational and employment expectations. Under the structure of the Taskforce, the Youth to Work Initiative will strengthen interagency research, demonstration projects, and education and training activities for youth to work activities. It will create a public awareness campaign to focus on youth with disabilities and reduce the stigma of their entering the workforce. To ensure fairness, this Initiative will ensure that youth with disabilities are included in all youth programs in federal agencies. To help ease the transition to work, it will explore how to increase access to health care and postsecondary education and training for youth going to work.

-- Able to work consortium to help youth with disabilities access job opportunities. The Presidential Taskforce on the Employment of Adults with Disabilities has worked with several major corporations to begin a public-private partnership that will help ensure that youth with disabilities are afforded the employment opportunities needed to lead to meaningful careers. These corporations, representing technology, pharmaceuticals, banking and investment, manufacturing, and communications, have volunteered to lead by example and demonstrate to other major corporations the importance and viability of hiring young people with disabilities. These pioneering companies will actively serve as mentors to other companies hiring youth with disabilities.

HELPING DISABLED INDIVIDUALS LIVE AND WORK IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. Yesterday, 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 care for people with disabilities of all ages. These initiatives include a new \$50 million investment in FY 2001 to help states more easily offer services to people with disabilities of all ages in the setting most appropriate to their needs; new guidance to state Medicaid directors to help them comply with the recent Olmstead Supreme Court ruling requiring Medicaid coverage for home- and community-based services; and a new public-private partnership between the Administration and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help individuals with disabilities in institutional settings transition into community-based care. In addition, the Vice President also announced new action to increase home

ownership; expand incentives for employment for individuals with disabilities to a broader range of housing assistance programs; and promote the development of new assistive technology for people with disabilities.

WORKING TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE ADA. Throughout this Administration, President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked hard to achieve the ADA's core goals - equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. This Administration has vigorously defended the ADA in court cases across the Nation; collaborated with state Medicaid directors to implement the Supreme Court's 1999 Olmstead decision, which prohibits unjustified isolation of institutionalized persons with disabilities; helped ensure that 80 percent of America's public transit buses are now accessible; implemented the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act, which the President signed into law last December; and developed far-reaching policies for a comprehensive, coordinated employment agenda through the Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities

PRESIDENT URGES THE CONGRESS TO ACT NOW ON NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. The President will urge the Congress to act now on national priorities that will address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and are fully funded in his budget, including:

-- A new \$1,000 tax credit to offset the formal and informal employment-related costs incurred by working people with disabilities. This tax credit would provide a new incentive for approximately 200,000-300,000 people with disabilities to begin working, and help those people with jobs maintain them. It would complement the Work Incentives Improvement Act and would be available to all people with disabilities, irrespective of their state Medicaid eligibility options. For participants in the Work Incentives Improvement Act Medicaid buy-in, this tax credit could pay for services not covered (e.g., assistive technology, transportation).

-- A new \$3,000 long-term care tax credit. This initiative supports almost 2 million Americans with long-term care needs and the family members who care for them through a \$3,000 tax credit, an investment of \$27 billion over 10 years. 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.

-- Providing an affordable, accessible Medicare prescription drug benefit option for all beneficiaries. The President has proposed a voluntary, affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit for all beneficiaries, including up to 5 million people with disabilities. Beginning in 2002, it would provide prescription drug coverage that would have a zero deductible and cover half of all prescription drug costs up to \$5,000 when fully phased in. It will also limit all out-of-pocket medication costs to \$4,000. This optional benefit would also provide negotiated discounts that would ensure that Medicare beneficiaries no longer pay the highest prices in the marketplace. The President's proposal is part of a broader set of reforms that would take the Medicare Trust Fund off budget, extend its life to at least 2030, make the program more efficient and competitive, and dedicate \$40 billion over 10 years to improve health care provider payment rates.

-- A strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. This legislation endorsed by over 200 health care provider and consumer advocacy groups, is the only bipartisan proposal currently being considered that includes: protections for all Americans in all health plans; protections for patients accessing emergency room care from financial sanctions; requirements that all health plans ensure continuity of care

for patients in the middle of a course of treatment; guarantees that assure access to necessary and accessible health care specialists; meaningful enforcement mechanisms that ensure recourse for patients who have been harmed as a result of a health plan's actions.

-- Establishing an Office of Disability Policy. The Clinton-Gore Administration supports establishing an Office of Disability Policy within the Department of Labor, and improving access for adults with disabilities to employment services offered through one-stop career center systems. The President's FY 2001 budget includes \$21 million for the Office of Disability Policy, which was recommended by the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Commerce

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, July 26, 2000

Contact: Morrie Goodman
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Robert L. Mallett
Deputy Secretary

U.S. Commerce Secretary Mineta Urges "Digital Inclusion" as Nation Commemorates 10th Anniversary of Americans With Disabilities Act

Washington, DC - As the nation recognizes the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) today, Secretary of Commerce Norman Y. Mineta - one of the original co-sponsors of the ADA - announced several key initiatives by the Department and called upon the American business community to work with him to ensure that Americans with disabilities are full participants in the nation's digital economy.

These initiatives follow yesterday's announcement by Vice President Gore of new efforts to promote the delivery of home and community-based services for people of all ages with disabilities.

"The Internet is becoming an essential tool for participating in today's economy and this Administration is committed to ensuring access to the Internet by all Americans," said Vice President Gore. "I commend the Department of Commerce for its work in closing the digital divide and look forward to working with Secretary Mineta to match the power of the Internet with the abilities of all Americans."

"Digital inclusion to bridge the digital divide is a top priority and we need to be sure that these technologies are available to everyone," said Secretary Mineta. "I urge the private sector to take the necessary steps to make the Web more accessible to the disabled and to think about inclusion from the moment they begin to design their products and their business processes."

The Department of Commerce has promoted private-sector efforts through its Technology Opportunity Program (TOP). One example is the Kentucky Rural Telecommunications Center Inc., which makes it possible for citizens in rural areas and small town communities of north-central Kentucky to address a variety of local economic, educational, cultural, and communication issues through a comprehensive regional information network. The Disability sector group develops ways to identify persons with severe disabilities and train them to use computers and access online services. Secretary Mineta acknowledged the work of the World Wide Web Consortium and their Web Access Initiative, which has developed principles allowing people to design web pages that are more accessible to those with disabilities.

Secretary Mineta stressed the value of digital inclusion to assist in the shortage of information technology workers. "Making the Web accessible is not only good because it expands the market for products, but assists in creating a virtually untapped source of IT workers," he stated.

- Office of the Secretary
- Bureau of Export Administration
- Economics and Statistics Administration
 - Bureau of Economic Analysis
 - Bureau of the Census
- Economic Development Administration
- International Trade Administration
- Minority Business Development Agency
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
- National Telecommunications & Information Administration
- Office of the Inspector General
- Patent and Trademark Office
- Technology Administration
 - National Institute of Standards & Technology
 - National Technical Information Service

Secretary Mineta announced that the Department of Commerce is doing the following to assist persons with disabilities:

- Conducting an assessment by the Bureau of Export Administration to identify which resources of the Federal laboratory system can be matched to the needs of the assistive technology industry. Matching specific assistive technology companies with specific Federal laboratories will begin in the Fall.
- Sponsoring an event this Fall focused on the disabled community as part of the Department's overall policy of digital inclusion to bridge the digital divide.
- Sponsoring, with the Department of Labor, a Harvard study that will test a methodology for accurately determining the number of people with disabilities in the workforce. This will include both those currently employed and those seeking employment.
- Conducting workshops by the Technology Administration's National Institute of Standards and Technology with industry and academic experts to examine technologies that are potentially fruitful for increasing disabled access.
- Funding programs by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to assist those with disabilities through the Technology Opportunity Program (TOP). TOP has contributed funding to eleven projects that improve the accessibility to people with disabilities.

The Department of Commerce has a history of working to accommodate employee needs, ranging from making available assistive technology to removing physical and cultural barriers in the workplace. Building upon this, Secretary Mineta is committed to supporting existing Federal programs which aim to hire disabled workers. For the first time, the Department has participated in the Workforce Recruitment Program to hire disabled students. The students are performing work in scientific, research, international business, statistical analysis, and administrative fields. Taking this one step further, the Department will expand its current efforts to seek out and bring aboard individuals at all levels who will reflect the diversity and strength of our Nation.



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The public can contact Secretary Mineta at NMineta@doc.gov or contact Deputy Secretary Mallett at DepSec@doc.gov. Direct inquiries about the content of this page to the Office of Public Affairs -- email opaosec@doc.gov or phone 202-482-4883. Direct technical inquiries about this page to webmaster@doc.gov or phone 202-501-0666 if urgent.

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Disability Statistics Abstract

July 2000 / Number 22

Disability and the Digital Divide

by H. Stephen Kaye

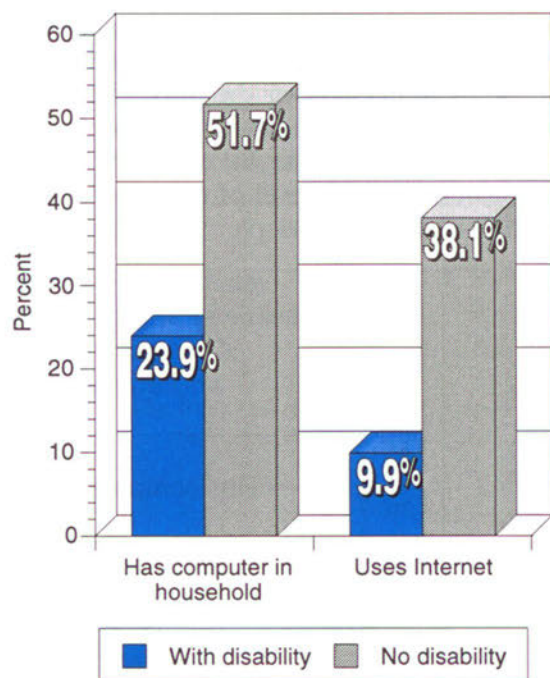
Americans with disabilities are less than half as likely as their non-disabled counterparts to own a computer, and they are about one-quarter as likely to use the Internet. These are the conclusions of a new report¹ on computer ownership and Internet use among people with disabilities, based on December 1998 data from the Current Population Survey, a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. For the purpose of this analysis, disability is defined in terms of a limitation in the ability to work. Those respondents reported to have a "health problem or disability which prevents them from working or which limits the amount or kind of work they can do" are counted as having a disability. The statistics presented in this abstract apply to the population 15 years of age or older.

Computer technology and the Internet have the tremendous potential to broaden the lives and

increase the independence of people with disabilities. To a population that is often physically as well as socially isolated, they can offer access to information, social interaction, cultural activities, employment opportunities, and consumer goods. Screen readers can provide blind people with instant access to vast quantities of online information, without having to wait for Braille or audiotope; voice recognition can enable people with limited manual dexterity to write letters, manage their finances, or perform work-related tasks. But, as the data in this abstract demonstrate, very few people with disabilities are able to take advantage of these possibilities.

As shown in Figure 1, just under one-quarter (23.9 percent) of people with disabilities have access to a computer at home, compared to just over half (51.7 percent) of their non-disabled counterparts. The gap in Internet use is even more striking: Only

Figure 1:
Computer ownership and Internet use, by disability status



one-tenth (9.9 percent) of people with disabilities connect to the Internet, compared to almost four-tenths (38.1 percent) of those without disabilities.

Elderly people with disabilities are particularly unlikely to make use of these technologies. Among persons 65 years of age or older, only one-tenth (10.6

DSC

Disability Statistics Center
University of California, San Francisco

Published by U.S. Department of Education,
National Institute on Disability and
Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

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Statement of Judy Brewer
Before the U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on the Constitution

Wednesday, February 9, 2000

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Judy Brewer⁽¹⁾. I am director of the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)⁽²⁾ International Program Office, at the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today on the issue of Web accessibility.

Overview

A consensus regarding Web accessibility solutions has developed over the past several years among leaders in Web industry, user representatives, and accessibility researchers. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has released two Web accessibility guidelines to date; a third is in an implementation testing period and close to being finalized.

Web accessibility solutions are generally inexpensive and easy to implement. They represent, essentially, good Web design. They are consistent with the evolving nature of the Web and reinforce the Web's ability to work across a multitude of different kinds of devices and purposes.

Web accessibility solutions bring more people onto the Web, stimulating commerce. They support the full range of creative and innovative design that draws users to the Web. There is a strong business case for accessibility, based on disability demographics; and a strong business case based on the benefits for all users that derive from accessibility solutions.

To quote Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the Web and director of the W3C, "The Web excels as a medium in which accessibility can be addressed. On the Web, a computer can automatically and cost-effectively represent the same information in a variety of ways according to the needs of users. Within the neutral forum of W3C, industry leaders, disability representatives, and others convened to develop accessibility solutions that are reasonable, practical, and effective. Web sites designed using very simple tools naturally tend to be accessible. Even sophisticated sites, designed with major effort, can be kept accessible with only a small proportion of that effort."

There is more work to be done to make the Web more accessible; but we already have a solid foundation of feasible solutions, with broad industry and disability community support.

The World Wide Web Consortium and Web Accessibility

W3C is the international vendor-neutral consortium that develops technologies for the Web. It has nearly 400 Member organizations, primarily Web industry leaders that come together to keep the Web an interoperable and universal information medium.

The W3C has four domains: Web Architecture, User Interface, Technology and Society, and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). WAI addresses accessibility on the level of core Web technologies, guidelines development, tools development, education and outreach, and monitoring of research and development. WAI receives support not only from general W3C Member funds but from the US government, European Commission, Government of Canada, and several industry supporters, including IBM/Lotus, Microsoft, and Bell Atlantic.

The Role of the Web in Current Society

The Web is information; it is commerce, education, employment opportunity, and entertainment. It has more resources than the best research library in the world, and more jobs posted than any newspaper. It has resources that foster civic participation and community-building. The Web has rapidly assumed an enormous role in society. In the U.S., it is one of the driving engines of our economy, and has become our daily workplace. The W3C's Recommendations seek to enable all users to benefit from this information medium.

To be relevant in this economy - in today's information society - one needs good access to the Web. People with disabilities, already underemployed and unemployed at some of the highest rates in society, are a user group that needs access to this medium.

At the same time, our economy cannot afford the absence of their participation. With close to 20% of the US population having disabilities, and many of those disabilities affecting access to information - including visual, hearing, physical, and cognitive disabilities, as well as the changing abilities of seniors - companies that forget to design for accessibility inadvertently throw away part of their marketplace.

Companies that fail to design for accessibility also fail to prepare for the future. By 2001, less than 50% of Web access will be from traditional desk-top computers. We are seeing an explosion of access from mobile phones, palm-top devices, the living room TV, and the dashboard of the car - all devices which require many of the same solutions as does accessibility.

An Overview of Web Accessibility Issues

I provide a brief overview here of accessibility issues for people with different kinds of disabilities. Implementation of W3C guidelines provides comprehensive solutions to all of these issues.

People with visual disabilities often use speech output, braille output, or screen magnification to access computers. On the Web, graphics and video that are labeled or described and tables and frames that are properly encoded enable users to access Web content regardless of visual disability. Audio that is captioned similarly becomes accessible to people who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Software that has keyboard alternatives for mouse-driven commands can be used by people with physical disabilities who might have difficulty using a mouse, as well as by people with visual disabilities. A consistent navigation structure within Web sites can substantially facilitate access for users with visual, cognitive, or physical disabilities.

Complementary Web Accessibility Solutions

Some solutions apply at the level of the information on a Web page, what we call "Web content." For instance, alternative text for images is already required in standard code for Web content. Others solutions apply at the level of Web browsers (such as Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, or Opera) for instance by providing keyboard support for mouse commands and easily-locatable directions on how to use accessibility features that are built into browsers.

Yet other solutions apply at the level of the core Web technologies - the code used in Web pages and browsers. The Web Accessibility Initiative reviews scores of technologies under development at W3C starting from the design stage, to ensure that they provide the support needed for accessibility. W3C has therefore provided a firm technological foundation for accessibility, for instance by ensuring that multimedia presentation languages can encode captions for audio, or that standard micropayment links used for E-Commerce will notify the user of obligated payments even when the user cannot see the screen.

Additional solutions involve improving the way assistive technologies such as screen readers, which produce speech or braille output from Web pages, work with browsers.

People often ask whether there is a magic bullet for Web accessibility - something that every one of the millions of people with different kinds of disabilities could buy, be given, obtain as shareware or obtain via some gateway on the Web - so that they could access everything on the Web without Web designers ever having to think about accessibility. Not only does this unlikely scenario have a much smaller chance of success than the complementary and pragmatic solutions described above, but it would mean that the benefits of accessible design for the Web as a whole would be lost.

Accessibility and the Evolution of Web Technologies

Accessibility fits well within the overall context of Web development. In order to be able to use an information medium, we need common conventions on how to communicate with each other. For the Web, at the most fundamental level one needs three things: a common way to request and send information over the internet - HTTP; a common way to put together documents so that we can all read them - HTML; and a common way of knowing where documents are - URL's.

Consider what happens when people talk together about business, education, or family or community matters. Without common conventions for talking to each other, communication would come to a halt. If one were to frame every comment with an unintelligible prefix, it would distract from whatever substance one might say. Likewise, if this testimony were wholly made up of images and no text, it would be difficult for many to understand, and one would justly feel that the business of this hearing had not been well-served. Yet that is the current state of the Web for many users today.

When communication is impaired in a business environment by failure to use common conventions, commerce is compromised. If communication stops even for only a group of participants in a business environment, two things happen: those participants are excluded from commerce; and the commercial sector loses the benefit of their participation.

The Web started with just three common conventions: HTTP, HTML, and URL's. As the Web has evolved, it has come to include more and more complex ways to control the appearance and encode the information in Web sites. When designers use Web technologies in non-standard ways, it reduces the potential for information to be understood by other parties, and undermines the role of the Web as a universal information medium.

Along with the evolution of more complex Web technologies, new methods of user access are also evolving. Palm-top devices, mobile phones, TV access to the Web - all these Web devices demand flexibility in how information can be accessed. We call this "device independence" of information. In the Web economy of the very near future, Web information will need to be available via any kind of device. Accessibility, because it requires flexibility of information presentation, provides one of the best paths to device-independence.

In order to maximize the potential of the Web's future for our economy and society, accessibility is therefore an inherent part of the common conventions that we use on the Web.

Three Web Accessibility Guidelines

W3C's Web accessibility guidelines describe the common conventions that enable Web accessibility. There are three guidelines: for Web sites; for the software that Web site designers use when they build Web sites, which we call "authoring tools"; and for browsers.

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, released in May 1999, explain how to make Web sites accessible enough that people with disabilities can use them with today's technologies. These guidelines were released with the support of industry leaders, as well as support from disability organizations internationally, access research organizations, and governments interested in ensuring that information on the Web is accessible.

The Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines, released in February 2000, provide guidance to developers of software used to build Web sites, so that software will automatically ensure accessibility of much of

the code used on Web sites, and so it can better repair sites that aren't accessible. These guidelines were released also with support from industry leaders and from many organizations internationally.

The User Agent Accessibility Guidelines explain how to make browsers and multimedia players more accessible, and how to make them work better with some of the assistive technology that people with disabilities use. These guidelines entered W3C's Candidate Recommendation status in January, 2000, and are expected to go to the nearly 400 Members of the W3C for final review in February or March of 2000.

Implementations of either of the Web software guidelines (the latter two guidelines) make it easier for Web designers to implement the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. For instance, as browsers develop more capabilities to support accessibility, Web site designers need to do less to make their pages accessible. Likewise, as authoring tools automate more of the production of accessible Web content, site designers will be able to produce accessible Web sites with little effort.

Costs Involved in Implementing Web Accessibility

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines are prioritized by importance, so that developers can focus on items that are most essential for accessibility to obtain the highest return on investment.

Since much of Web accessibility is a matter of good design, the cost for accessibility on many sites is negligible. Small and simple sites may require only a few words of alternative text for images - which is required for standard code in any case by HTML 4.0, released back in December 1997. On more complex commercial sites, content is frequently generated by scripts from a database, and these sites can be set up to generate accessible information instead of inaccessible information. On sites that have extensive multi-media, captioning of audio and description of video involves minimal production cost compared to production of the multimedia itself, and the size of the captions or descriptions is negligible compared to the size of the audio or video files themselves. Re-designs for accessibility of Web sites can typically be addressed within an organization's periodic site designs, absorbing the cost of retrofitting.

Myths persist about what is required by Web accessibility - for instance, that every Web page should have a text-only version of the page, and that this is burdensome to Web sites designers. Not only is this not true - the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines strongly discourage the use of text-only pages for accessibility, for a number of reasons - but were it in fact a recommendation, it would be trivial to accomplish with many of today's authoring tools which can generate customized presentations of content from the same database.

Progress and Involvement to Date

We have seen strong interest and appreciation for WAI's work from a large number of companies. Involvement and implementation have followed from a smaller number of organizations.

The single most important need right now is for implementations of the Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines. As of the recent release of the Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines, there were public commitments from several authoring tool developers to make their products support the guidelines, and another half-dozen developers have indicated confidentially that they are already working on implementations of these guidelines. But there are hundreds of different tools used to generate content for the Web. If a majority of these tools facilitated the creation of accessible content as described by the Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines, there would very quickly be an enormous increase in the amount of accessible content on the Web.

There are several reasons that companies choose to get involved in Web accessibility. Two factors that are frequently mentioned include the demographics of the disability marketplace, and the carry-over benefits from accessible design, such as with the greater server efficiency and maintainability of sites which use Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to control the appearance of sites.

But in an industry with intense competition, for many companies these factors can be insufficient to lead to a critical mass of involvement in or implementation of Web accessibility. The presence of several regulatory processes in the background appears to have stimulated parties to come to the table who have not previously been involved in accessibility, and enabled other parties already working on accessibility within companies to leverage more attention and implementation commitments from product divisions that they work with.

Conclusion

Encouragement of involvement and implementation of Web accessibility solutions would contribute to progress on Web accessibility. In an area where the pace of technology is so rapid, lost ground is not easily made up.

This statement has described the nature of Web accessibility issues; approaches to developing accessibility solutions; and the status of involvement and implementation by industry. We need a continuation of the good work of the broad forum of organizations involved in developing Web solutions, so that the Web can move forward as a technology that serves all.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today.

1.

¹. Judy Brewer is Director of the Web Accessibility Initiative International Program Office, of the World Wide Web Consortium. Biographical information is available at <<http://www.w3.org/People/Brewer>>. Required disclosure statement: "I coordinate a project on behalf of the W3C, an international consortium of industry, academe and user organizations which develops Web standards. The W3C is in part hosted by MIT, primarily funded by member organizations, and among its other activities it receives funding from multiple sources to develop and promote solutions to accessibility issues on the Web. That funding for work on Web accessibility includes approximately \$350,000 per year in funds from the US National Science Foundation and the US Department of Education, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. My statements for the purposes of this hearing do not represent the opinion of those agencies, nor of the host institution, MIT."

2.

². Information on W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative is available at <<http://www.w3.org/WAI>>, including links to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines <<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG>>, the Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines <<http://www.w3.org/TR/ATAG>> and the User Agent Accessibility Guidelines <<http://www.w3.org/TR/UAAG>>.

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Universal Information Access on the WWW

1. Introduction
2. What is the WWW?
3. What is HTML?
4. Implementing accessibility on the WWW
5. Guidelines
6. Policy / Legislation
7. Tools and resources
8. Examples of Accessible servers

Introduction



The 1934 Telecommunications Act defined the concept of "Universal Service" for Telephones. The intent was to provide widespread availability of basic communication services at affordable rates. Telephone service would be available to everyone, even those in remote areas. Sixty years later a new revolution is occurring in telecommunications - The National Information Infrastructure.

The "National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action" is the Federal government's blueprint for the development of the NII. The "Agenda for Action" clearly defines the principals by which the NII will be designed. It states:

A major objective in developing the NII will be to extend the Universal Service concept to the information needs of the American people in the 21st century. As a matter of fundamental fairness, this nation cannot accept a division of our people among telecommunications or information 'Haves' and 'have-nots'. The administration is committed to developing a broad, modern concept of Universal Service - one that would emphasize giving all Americans who desire it easy, affordable access to advanced communications and information services, regardless of income, disability or location.

This new, expanded "universal Service" I will call "Universal Access". The Clinton administration is committed to redefining and expanding the "Universal Service" concept to ensure "universal access" to a world of information.

Unquestionably, the fastest growing aspect of the NII is the World Wide Web otherwise known as WWW, W3 or just the Web. This unprecedented growth of the WWW is due to many factors including its power, flexibility, elegance, and simplicity. The good news is that the WWW is very accessible for persons with disabilities. This paper presents an overview, for information providers and users of the WWW, of how it can be used to achieve "Universal Access" to the electronic information of the 21st century.

What is the WWW?

To understand why the WWW is so accessible, it is important to understand what the WWW is. The WWW is a network of information servers throughout the world, all interconnected via the Internet network.

Information providers format the information in files according to a specific format (HTML), and organize the information on a system called a server. To access the information, one uses a program called a browser or viewer. Examples of browsers are Lynx, Mosaic (which are both free) and numerous commercial products.

The Internet connects the user to all WWW servers throughout the world using a communications

protocol called HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol).

Server <--- Internet <--- Browser

HTML HTTP Mosaic/Lynx Everything you ever wanted to know about the WWW is available from the World Wide Web Consortium.

What is HTML?

Hyper Text Markup Language or HTML (2) is the formal language used for formatting documents on the WWW. The term HyperText Markup Language consists of two very important concepts: HyperText and Markup Language.

HyperText is a method of expanding on the information in a document by jumping (hyperlinking) to another place in the document or to another document. For example, a document about the White House might be hyperlinked to another document about the President. The document about the President might in turn be hyperlinked to other documents, potentially, anywhere on the Internet. The user selects the desired links to traverse the Web.

A markup language is a system used for designating (tagging) the structural elements of a document. For example, the Title in a particular document would be marked with a <TITLE tag. Other tags include paragraph <P, Heading <H1, etc. HTML is a subset of Standard Generalized Mark up language (SGML), which is an international (ISO) standard for document description (ISO 8879). Because WWW documents are stored in this standardized, structural format, they can be translated to Braille using standard Braille translation tools.

The most important accessibility feature of the WWW is that HTML files are stored in ASCII format. Almost every computer architecture, Operating system and input/output device can work effectively with ASCII documents.

Complete HTML information is available from the WWW Consortium.

Implementing accessibility on the WWW

Because of the structured nature of HTML, the WWW provides tremendous power and flexibility in presenting information in multiple formats (text, audio, video, graphic, etc.). However, the features that provide power and elegance for some users present potential barriers for users with sensory impairments. The indiscriminate use of graphic images and video restrict access for users with visual impairments. Use of audio and non-captioned video restrict access for users with hearing impairments.

A secondary problem is alternate file formats. Some WWW providers are beginning to store some documents in inaccessible file formats such as PDF from Adobe Systems (3).

The level of accessibility of the information on the WWW is dependent on the format of the information, the transmission media, and the display system. Many of the issues related to the transmission media and the display system cannot be affected by the general user and, as such, are beyond the scope of this paper. However, anyone creating WWW information for a Web server has complete control of the accessibility of her/his information. Careful design and coding of information will provide access to all users without compromising the power and elegance of the WWW.

The primary way to assure the accessibility of a WWW document is to provide all graphic and audio information in alternate formats.

Some general guidelines are as follows:

- In-line graphics or icons should have a short textual description included in the "ALT=" attribute

of the "IMG" element.

- ISMAPs which are essentially a graphic representation of a menu, should have equivalent text menus. The White House Home Page is a good example of an ISMAP. The accessible version looks like this.
- Audio files should have associated text transcriptions or text descriptions.



- Include comments in GIF files. Here is a good example of a gif file with a comment included.
- Make link text descriptive but brief.
- All HTML documents should strictly follow published specifications. Proprietary extensions should be avoided.
- Alternate file formats should be used only as alternatives to rather than replacements for ASCII files.
- If on-line forms are used, there should be an alternate method for accomplishing the same functions.

Policy / Legislation

Select here for information about laws and policies that relate to Information Access on the WWW.

Tools and Resources

There are numerous tools and resources which impact accessibility of the WWW. Some of which include:

- The Center for Information Technology Accommodation (formerly the Clearinghouse on Computer Accommodation) at the General Services Administration, works with Federal agencies to ensure the accessibility of their WWW servers. CITA also is involved with the development of and implementation of Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) and Federal Information Resource Management Regulations to ensure optimal accessibility of information systems within the Federal government. Contact Quentis.Scott@GSA.GOV.
- ICADD - The International Committee on Accessible Document Design is chartered "to develop and encourage the document transformations that print disabled persons are working toward. Members of this committee are working to ensure that the emerging HTML standards include enhanced accessibility for print disabled users. Contact Tom Wesley, Department of Computing, University of Bradford wesley@bradford.ac.uk
- Mosaic Access Project - The developers of Mosaic, at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, under funding from the National Science Foundation, have formed a project team to promote enhancements to Mosaic which enhance the accessibility of Mosaic and the Web. Contact: Drew Browning, University of Illinois, drew@uic.edu
- Jeff Suttor at UCLA has developed and made available a free, on-line, free, service for translation of on-line HTML documents to ICADD format. This facilitates the translation of any properly formatted document to Braille. To use the service, Contact: Jeff Suttor at JSuttor@Library.ucla.edu

- Lynx and DOS Lynx are character based viewers. The programs were created by and are available free from the University of Kansas. They allow a user to connect to the WWW using a dial-up connection. Both Lynx (for UNIX) and DOS Lynx (for DOS) systems work well with speech and Braille interfaces. Lynx is available for FTP at <ftp://ftp2.cc.ukans.edu/pub/www/>

Examples of Accessible servers

- The WWW server at the White House in Washington, DC has implemented many of the guidelines in this paper.
- The WWW server at the Center for IT Accommodation has good stuff about the NII.

Last modified on January 6, 1999.

Return  to CITA homepage

*"The power of the Web is in its universality.
Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect."*

Tim Berners-Lee, W3C Director and inventor of the World Wide Web

The World Wide Web offers unprecedented access to information, electronic commerce, educational opportunities, employment opportunities, workplace communication, government services, recreation, and more. However, there are currently barriers on the Web for people with visual, hearing, physical and cognitive disabilities.

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is committed to promoting a high degree of usability for people with disabilities. Web accessibility solutions also benefit other users, such as those using mobile devices, those with low bandwidth connections, or without audio output on a device. W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), in coordination with industry, disability organizations, research centers and government, addresses accessibility of the Web through five complementary activities:

- Ensuring that Web technologies support accessibility
- Developing guidelines for accessibility
- Developing tools to evaluate & facilitate accessibility
- Conducting education and outreach
- Coordinating with research and development

W3C/WAI RESOURCES:

Guidelines:

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG): <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG>
Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines (ATAG): <http://www.w3.org/TR/ATAG>
User Agent Accessibility Guidelines (UAAG): <http://www.w3.org/TR/UAAG>

Additional resources linked from the WAI home page <http://www.w3.org/WAI> include:

Getting Started: Making a Web Site Accessible
Curriculum on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
Online Overview of WAI
Techniques for WCAG, ATAG, UAAG
Accessibility Features of HTML, CSS, SMIL
Fact Sheets for WCAG, ATAG
Alternative Web Browsing
Evaluation and Repair Tools
Policies Relating to Web Accessibility
Quick Tips to Make Accessible Web Sites

QUICK TIPS:

The "Quick Tips to Make Accessible Web Sites" on the back of this flyer provide an introduction and memory prompt for key concepts of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The complete guidelines are available at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG>, and include a prioritized checklist. Copies of the Quick Tips in a business-card sized format can be ordered from <http://www.w3.org/WAI/References/QuickTips>.

W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative International Program Office is supported in part by funding from the U.S. National Science Foundation; U.S. Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research; the European Commission's DG XIII Telematics for Disabled and Elderly Programme; Government of Canada, Industry Canada; Microsoft Corporation; IBM/Lotus; and Bell Atlantic.

QUICK TIPS TO MAKE ACCESSIBLE WEB SITES

- **Images & animations.** Use the **alt** attribute to describe the function of each visual.
- **Image maps.** Use client-side **MAP** and text for hotspots.
- **Multimedia.** Provide captioning and transcripts of audio, and descriptions of video.
- **Hypertext links.** Use text that makes sense when read out of context. For example, avoid “click here.”
- **Page organization.** Use headings, lists, and consistent structure. Use **CSS** for layout and style where possible.
- **Graphs & charts.** Summarize or use the **longdesc** attribute.
- **Scripts, applets, & plug-ins.** Provide alternative content in case active features are inaccessible or unsupported.
- **Frames.** Use **NOFRAMES** and meaningful titles.
- **Tables.** Make line-by-line reading sensible. Summarize.
- **Check your work.** Validate. Use tools, checklist, and guidelines at www.w3.org/TR/WCAG.

FOR COMPLETE GUIDELINES & CHECKLIST: WWW.W3.ORG/WAI

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HOME	ABOUT US	INTERNATIONAL	OUR CAPABILITIES	INVESTOR RELATIONS	SITE SEARCH	HARRIS P
			CLIENT SERVICES	NEWS ROOM	CAREERS	WEEK
						CONT

Harris Poll Library

ABOUT THE POLL

THE HARRIS POLL #30, June 7, 2000

LATEST ARTICLE

HOW THE INTERNET IS IMPROVING THE LIVES OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

2000 ARTICLES

1999 ARTICLES

by Humphrey Taylor

The Internet is having a very positive impact on the lives of adults with disabilities who are online, and this impact is much greater than it is among adults without disabilities. As the number of adults with disabilities online continues to increase, the Internet is helping to greatly improve the quality of their lives. Specifically, it allows adults with disabilities to be better informed, more connected to the world around them and puts them in touch with people who have similar interests and experiences.

These conclusions are all drawn from a Harris Interactive Poll of 535 adults with disabilities and 614 adults without disabilities, who access the Internet, and who were surveyed online between March 22nd and April 5th. This research was conducted for the National Organization on Disability using a grant from Aetna US Healthcare.

The data from the survey were statistically weighted to be representative of all adults, with and without disabilities who are online, whether from home, work, school, library or other location. People with disabilities are less likely than people without disabilities to be online (43% v. 57%). In particular they are much less likely to be online from work (16% v. 30%), because for fewer of them are working.

The main findings of this online Harris Poll include (with all percentages based on adults who are online):

- Adults with disabilities spend, on average, twice as much time online as adults without disabilities who are not - 20 hours per week compared to 10 hours per week.
- Adults with disabilities are much more likely than adults without disabilities to report that the Internet has significantly improved the quality of their lives (48% vs. 27%)
- Adults with disabilities are also more likely than adults without disabilities to report that the Internet has helped them to:
 - Be better informed about the world (52% vs. 39%)
 - Feel connected to the world (44% vs. 38%)

- o Reach out to people with similar interests as experiences (42% vs. 30%)
- Conversely, adults without disabilities are slightly more likely than adults with disabilities to say that the Internet has significantly helped them communicate and socialize with close friends, relatives and neighbors (49% vs. 42%).

Further analysis by age points to interesting differences in the use of the Internet between adults with and without disabilities. For adults with disabilities, those who are younger (under 30) tend to use the Internet more often - an average of 25 hours versus 8 hours than younger adults (under 30) without disabilities.

In addition, even though the average number of hours spent on the Internet decreases somewhat as adults with disabilities get older, those who are older say that the Internet has significantly improved the quality of their lives in greater numbers than comparably aged adults without disabilities.

TABLE 1

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND PEOPLE WITHOUT DISABILITIES WHO ARE ONLINE

Base: All Online

"At "home", "work" and "another location", do you personally use the computer to access an online service such as CompuServe or America Online, or not?"
 "At "home", "work" and "another location", do you personally use the computer to access the Internet, or not?"
 "At "home", "work" and "another location", do you personally use the computer to access the World Wide Web, or not?"
 Asked for "home", "work" and "another location".

	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	%	%
Online from home	30	48
Online from work	16	30
Another location	21	21
Online total	43	57

Note: Many people are online from two locations.

(Based on aggregated Harris Polls 11/99 to 4/00)

TABLE 2-A

TIME SPENT PER WEEK ONLINE

Base: All Online

"Excluding e-mail, how many hours a week do you spend on the Internet or the World Wide Web?"

	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	%	%
Less than 6 hours	18	21
6 to 10 hours	15	30
11 to 15 hours	10	12
16 or more hours	58	37
Average (median) hours per week	20	10

TABLE 2-B

AVERAGE (MEDIAN) HOURS PER WEEK - BY AGE

Base: All Online

	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	(Median Hours)	(Median Hours)
Under 30 years old	25	8
30 - 44 years old	25	11
45 - 64 years old	20	15
65 or older	20	18

TABLE 3-A

IMPACT OF INTERNET ON QUALITY OF LIFE

Base: All Online

"Has the Internet significantly improved, somewhat improved, or had no effect on your quality of life?"

	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	%	%
No effect	11	15
Somewhat improved quality of life	41	58

Significantly improved quality of life	48	27
--	----	----

TABLE 3-B**IMPACT OF INTERNET ON QUALITY OF LIFE - BY AGE**

Base: All Online

Base: Significantly Improved Quality of Life

	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	%	%
Under 30 years old	19	36
30 - 44 years old	52	26
45 - 64 years old	47	28
65 or older	56	6

TABLE 4**IMPACT OF INTERNET ON CONNECTING AND INFORMING PEOPLE**

Base: All Online

"Specifically, how has the Internet affected your ability to do each of the following?"

INTERNET HAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED:	Adults with Disabilities	Adults without Disabilities
	%	%
Being better informed about world around me	52	39
Feeling connected to the world around me	44	38
Reaching out to people who have similar interests or experiences	42	30
Communicated and socialize with close friends, relatives or neighbors	42	49

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between March 22nd - April 5th, 2000, among nationwide cross section of 535 adults with disabilities and 614 adults without disabilities.

Data were weighted by age, sex, education, income, race/ethnicity, and region, as well as propensity to be online (a composite of several factors) in order to generalize the results to the national population.

In theory, with a randomly chosen sample of this size and after weighting the data, one could say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 2 percentage points of what they would be if the entire adult population of the United States had been polled. The sample used by Harris Interactive is not a random sample. While individuals have been randomly sampled from our database for this survey, they have previously chosen to take part in the Harris Interactive database.

There are several other possible sources of error in all polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. These potential sources of error include question wording and question order, non-response, and screening (e.g. for likely voters). It is difficult or impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors so the words "margin of error" should be avoided when reporting all survey data.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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