

Nomination for Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission

March 15, 1994

The President today announced his intent to nominate Susan Ness as a member of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

“As a former communications leader, Susan Ness brings to the FCC valuable perspective. Her extensive experience covers many communications industry sectors including telecommunications, radio, television, cable television, programming and publishing,” the President said. “She will be an excellent addition to this important Commission.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Memorandum on the White House Conference on Small Business

March 15, 1994

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: White House Conference on Small Business

In September, I appointed the White House Conference on Small Business Commission. The Commission is charged with convening a series of State and regional meetings that will culminate in a national White House Conference on Small Business in June 1995.

These 66 meetings will attract up to 40,000 participants who will discuss the challenges facing small businesses. These representatives—small business owners and entrepreneurs—will develop specific recommendations for executive and congressional action. These recommendations will help constitute the small business agenda for the 21st century.

I ask each of you to support this important effort, by taking the following measures. First, each department and agency should prepare a list of significant policy initiatives affecting small businesses undertaken in the past year. Second, each department and agency should identify one or two potential

new initiatives that would improve the economic or regulatory climate for small businesses. These two items should be forwarded to Gene B. Sperling, Deputy Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, no later than April 1, 1994.

The White House Office of Cabinet Affairs, working with the National Economic Council staff, the White House Office of Public Liaison, and the Small Business Administration, will coordinate various departments’ and agencies’ participation in the Conference. To facilitate that process, please designate a deputy-level contact on your staff to serve as a liaison and to work directly with the White House offices and the Small Business Administration. Each liaison will be asked to attend regular meetings and charged with oversight of the department’s or agency’s contribution to and participation in the Conference. Please forward your designee’s name to Christine A. Varney, Deputy Assistant to the President for Cabinet Affairs, by April 1.

Thank you for your support of this important effort to assist our Nation’s small businesses.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the “Reemployment Act of 1994”

March 15, 1994

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit today for your immediate consideration and prompt enactment the “Reemployment Act of 1994”. Also transmitted is a section-by-section analysis. This legislation is vital to help Americans find new jobs and build sustainable careers.

Our current set of programs was designed to meet the different needs of an earlier economy. People looking for help today confront a confusing, overlapping, and duplicative tangle of programs, services, and rules. Job seekers—whether unemployed or looking for better jobs—have a difficult time getting the information they need: What bene-

fits and services are available to them? Where can they get good quality training? What do they need to know to find and hold good jobs and to build sustainable careers?

The underlying problem is the lack of a coherent employment and training system. Instead, we have many disconnected, category-based programs—each with distinct eligibility requirements, operating cycles, and program standards. We need a true system of lifelong learning—not the current hodgepodge of programs, some of which work, and some of which don't. The legislation I am transmitting today is an important first step in building this system.

We need to build a reemployment system because our current unemployment system no longer delivers what many American workers need. In the past, when a worker lost a job, he or she often returned to that job as soon as the business cycle picked up again and the company was ready to rehire. The unemployment system was designed to tide workers over during temporary dry spells. Today, when a worker loses a job, that job often is gone forever.

Our economy has generated new jobs. In 1993 alone, 1.7 million new private sector jobs were created—more than in the previous 4 years combined. While the jobs exist, the pathways to them aren't always clear.

The Reemployment Act of 1994 strives to fix this. It is based on evidence of what works for getting workers into new and better jobs. Programs that work are customer-driven, offering customized service, quality information, and meaningful choices. Programs that work provide job search assistance to help dislocated workers become reemployed rapidly, feature skill training connected to real job opportunities, and offer support services to make long-term training practical for those who need it.

The Act reflects six key principles:

First is universal access and program consolidation. The current patchwork of dislocated worker programs is categorical, inefficient, and confusing. The Reemployment Act of 1994 will consolidate six separate programs into an integrated service system that focuses on what workers need to get their next job, not the reason why they lost their last job.

Second is high-quality reemployment services. Most dislocated workers want and need only information and some basic help in assessing their skills and planning and conducting their job search. These services are relatively simple and inexpensive, and they have been shown to pay off handsomely in reducing jobless spells.

Third is high-quality labor market information, which must be a key component of any reemployment effort. The labor market information component of the Reemployment Act of 1994 will knit together various job data systems and show the way to new jobs through expanding access to good data on where jobs are and what skills they require.

Fourth is one-stop service. At a recent conference that I attended on "What Is Working" in reemployment efforts, a common experience of workers was the difficulty of getting good information on available services. Instead of forcing customers to waste their time and try their patience going from office to office, the new system will require States to coordinate services for dislocated workers through career centers. It allows States to compete for funds to develop a more comprehensive network of one-stop career centers to serve under one roof anyone who needs help getting a first, new, or better job, and to streamline access to a wide range of job training and employment programs.

The fifth principle of the legislation is effective retraining for those workers who need it to get a new job. Some workers need retraining. The Reemployment Act of 1994 will also provide workers financial support when they need it to let them complete meaningful retraining programs.

Sixth is accountability. The Reemployment Act of 1994 aims to restructure the incentives facing service providers to begin focusing on workers as customers. Providers who deliver high-quality services for the customer and achieve positive outcomes will prosper in the new system. Those who fail to do so will see their funding dry up.

The Reemployment Act of 1994 will create a new comprehensive reemployment system that will enhance service, improve access, and assist Americans in finding good new jobs. This is a responsible proposal that is fully offset over the next 5 years.

I urge the Congress to give this legislation prompt and favorable consideration so that Americans will have available a new, comprehensive reemployment system that works for everyone.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 15, 1994.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16.

**The President's News Conference
With Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
of Israel**

March 16, 1994

The President. Mr. Prime Minister, friends, we come together today at an important time for the Middle East. We are closer to a lasting peace than would have been thought only a year ago. Yet we are further from that peace than we expected to be only a month ago.

The events of the past several weeks have demonstrated the risks in this great undertaking. The bloodshed in Hebron was a tragic reminder that the forces of reaction will lash out whenever peace becomes a real possibility. We must not let the enemies of peace triumph. We must not allow them to deny Israel and its neighbors a future of hope. And that is why I applaud Prime Minister Rabin's courageous stance against militant extremism. And it is why I have called upon the Prime Minister and Chairman Arafat to find a way to resume negotiations and to do so quickly.

Today we discussed ways to put the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations back on track. We agreed on the need for concrete measures to ensure security for Palestinians as well as for Israelis and for rapid implementation of the Declaration of Principles to give Palestinians control over their own affairs and well-being.

In our meeting, the Prime Minister and I also discussed ways to make 1994 a year of breakthrough in the negotiations between Israel and Syria. This would not only help bolster the agreement already achieved with the Palestinians, it would also help advance

our overall objective of a comprehensive peace, one that encompasses Jordan and Lebanon as well.

President Asad spoke in Geneva of his strategic choice for peace with Israel. Prime Minister Rabin told me today that peace with Syria is a strategic imperative. These two leaders have a great responsibility to the people of their region. As a full partner in the process, the U.S. stands ready to help them achieve that lasting peace that can end the Israeli-Arab conflict and transform the Middle East.

The Prime Minister and I agreed that as the region turns to the business of establishing peace, the Arab boycott of Israel must end. It is a relic of the past, born of animosity and exclusion. For all the peoples of the Middle East to prosper, economic barriers and isolation must yield to dialog and cooperation.

During our meeting today, we also discussed what the United States can do to maintain and enhance Israel's security as it continues to take real risks to achieve peace. We talked about ways the U.S. could help Israel defend against long-term threats to its security. And I reaffirm my commitment to work with Congress to maintain our present levels of assistance and to consider how we might help Israel defray the costs of peace. We've also pledged to do whatever we can to help resolve the cases of Israeli MIA's.

Since the beginning of this administration, the Prime Minister and I have worked to promote the common interest and values our nations share. Today we are working closely together on such issues, including those which now confront the U.N. Security Council. Our efforts have one common purpose, maintaining the principles we both share while doing all we can to promote peace.

This is an historic moment for Israel. And I am profoundly aware, Mr. Prime Minister, of the great burdens you are bearing in your search for peace. You have the admiration and respect of the entire United States and our Nation's pledge of support and steadfast friendship.

As we approach Passover, a time to celebrate freedom and redemption, let us dedicate ourselves to a season of new beginnings