

Appointment for Posts at the United States Office of Consumer Affairs *December 21, 1993*

The President announced today that he will appoint Polly B. Baca to be Director and Paul Steven Miller to be Deputy Director of the Department of Health and Human Services U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs. The Office of Consumer Affairs is the primary Agency in the Federal Government for consumer affairs and has responsibility to both the White House and the Department of Health and Human Services on this issue.

"We have a responsibility to the American people to ensure that they are treated fairly in the consumer marketplace," said the President. "I am counting on Polly Baca and Paul Miller to run this important office and to represent the needs of consumers throughout the Federal Government."

NOTE: Biographies of the appointees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks Announcing Grants for Programs for the Homeless *December 22, 1993*

Thank you, Reverend Steinbruck. He was so good I kind of hate to spoil the occasion. [Laughter] I want to thank all of you for being here, those of you who work in the field of homelessness. I want to thank Senator Riegle and Congressman Vento and Congressman Frank and Congressman Kildee for their support in the Congress. I want to say how good it is to see my friend Mayor Schmoke here who's done so much in the housing area. And I want to thank, too, Secretary Cisneros and Assistant Secretary Cuomo for the leadership they have shown.

I want to try to explain why, 3 days before Christmas, this is an important event not just because of the money involved but because this represents a different approach to what has become our most painful and, as a country, I think one of our most embarrassing social problems.

We have tried to look beyond the issue of temporary shelters to the question of permanent relief from the condition of homelessness. And I congratulate Assistant Secretary Cuomo and all the people at HUD, who worked with a lot of you who labor in housing and have for years for the homeless, a lot of you who've worked with the mentally ill, with people who have other problems, in coming up with an approach that at least gives us a chance to try to go beyond the symptoms to the cause, to try to deal with this problem on a long-term basis.

For years, our Nation's attention has been properly focused on the emergency needs of the homeless and the efforts just to find people a place to stay on a cold night. That's an important thing. Nearly every day when I go out running I run by a group of homeless men who sleep on the grates within two blocks of my back door. And we've developed a kind of a friendly relationship. They say hello to me. I say hello to them. I wish to goodness on the days that are cold and windy, when I find it difficult to find the courage to run, they at least didn't have to spend the night there. But I also know that there are other factors at work inside the minds and hearts of those people which make some of them reluctant to come in and which make it impossible for them to stay in.

So we have tried to ask some other questions with this proposal: What kind of skills and assistance do homeless people need to really move from the streets to places of their own? How do we help maintain their housing in more permanent and stable ways when lives themselves have often never been permanent or stable in any traditional sense?

For some of the homeless we may never find the answers. For whatever sad reason, some people do drift beyond the outer realm of society and never come back. But a lot of others, especially the parents and their children, can be lifted out of their helplessness and hopelessness if we relate to them in the right way.