

Statement on Efforts To Bridge the Digital Divide *October 16, 2000*

I am pleased by a new report released today by the Commerce Department, documenting a sharp increase in the number of Americans that have access to computers and the Internet. Although much more remains to be done to bridge the digital divide and create digital opportunity for all Americans, I am especially pleased that many low-income, rural, and minority households are beginning to “get connected” at rates faster than the national average.

Access to these information age tools is becoming critical to full participation in America’s economic, political, and social life. Americans are using the Internet to vote, look for work, acquire new skills, and communicate with their

children’s teachers. To ensure that we continue to make progress in bridging the digital divide, I urge Congress to fund the initiatives that I have proposed in my budget. These include my proposals to fully fund community technology centers, preparing tomorrow’s teachers to use technology, assistive technology for people with disabilities, and the Commerce Department’s home Internet access and technology opportunity program.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Department of Commerce report entitled “Falling Through the Net: Toward Digital Inclusion.”

Statement on the Resignation of Barry R. McCaffrey as Director of National Drug Control Policy *October 16, 2000*

General Barry McCaffrey, USA (Ret.), has informed me that he will step down in January as Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank and commend him for his extraordinary work in meeting one of our Nation’s most pressing challenges. General McCaffrey has brought to his post the same professionalism, dedication, and leadership that have exemplified his 40 years of steadfast service to our Nation.

In accepting this post in 1996, General McCaffrey retired from the United States Army as its youngest and most decorated four-star general. He had served and commanded with honor from West Point to the Dominican Republic to Vietnam to the Persian Gulf and, finally, as Commander in Chief, Southern Command. He was twice awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our Nation’s second-highest military honor.

In the nearly 5 years General McCaffrey has led our war on drugs, we have made significant

progress both at home and abroad. We have dramatically increased our counter-drug spending and launched a \$1 billion public-private media campaign to educate young people about the dangers of drug use. Our efforts are paying off. Adolescent drug use in the United States dropped 21 percent in the past 2 years alone, and drug-related murders are at their lowest level in a decade. And working with our international partners, we have helped to significantly reduce coca cultivation in Latin America and helped to build a level drug-free playing field for the world’s Olympians.

Our Nation and my administration have benefited greatly from General McCaffrey’s outstanding dedication, enterprise, and leadership. He has been a valued member of my Cabinet, and I am grateful for his sound counsel. I am confident that he will continue to serve our Nation with honor and distinction in the years ahead. The First Lady and I wish him and his wife, Jill, all the best in their new endeavors.