



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News media Information 202 / 418-0500
TTY 202 / 418-2555
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

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News Media Contacts:
Linda Paris at (202) 418-7121
e-mail: lparis@fcc.gov
David Fiske at (202) 418-0513
e-mail: dfiske@fcc.gov

CHAIRMAN WILLIAM E. KENNARD ANNOUNCES RESIGNATION EFFECTIVE JAN. 19

“BROADBAND CHAIRMAN” PROMOTED COMPETITION, ACCESS, AND GREATER CONSUMER CHOICE

Washington, DC – Today FCC Chairman William E. Kennard announced his resignation from the Federal Communications Commission, effective January 19, 2001. The Chairman said he leaves the office with great pride in the FCC’s accomplishments and with deep gratitude for having had an opportunity to serve the American public.

Chairman Kennard presided over the FCC during a momentous time in the agency’s history, as the FCC implemented historic legislation to bring competition to communications markets. During his three-year tenure, Chairman Kennard succeeded in promoting competition and consumer choice in the telecommunications marketplace; encouraging the rollout of broadband and digital technologies; expanding access to technology for all Americans; and streamlining and revamping the Commission for the Digital Age.

Chairman Kennard has implemented the 1996 Telecommunications Act to benefit consumers and to create a market where “monopoly is ended, innovation and entrepreneurship are cherished, and consumers have competitive choice.” As such he reduced telephone rates domestically and internationally, and aggressively promoted the benefits of competition and deregulation the world over. For his efforts, Kennard has been labeled the “Broadband Chairman” and a “Consumer Champion for the Digital Age.”

In addition, the Chairman made bridging the Digital Divide a top priority. During his tenure, the FCC successfully implemented the E-Rate program, which connected 95% of the nation’s schools and over one million classrooms to the Internet. Chairman Kennard also worked to expand access to all Americans, including minorities, Native Americans, persons with disabilities, and the disadvantaged in rural and remote areas. His achievements include establishing a Disabilities Rights Office at the FCC, bringing telephone service to over one million new low-income Native Americans on tribal lands, and creating a new low-power radio service for school, church, and community use.

“We must bring the benefits of the Digital Age to all Americans,” said Kennard. “From the business districts to the barrios; from those with every advantage to those with disabilities; from the young to the old; from suburban enclaves to the rural heartland.”

In the letter of resignation to President Clinton, Kennard wrote, “I feel very privileged that I was able to serve as Chairman of the FCC at a time when communications technologies are so dramatically changing the way the American people live, work, and learn.”

For the next few months, Chairman Kennard will serve as a Senior Fellow of the Aspen Institute *Communications and Society Program* in Washington, D.C. There, he will advise on leadership, communications policy, and program activities and operations. He will also become the first chairman of the program's new advisory board.

The Aspen Institute is a global, impartial forum for leveraging the power of leaders to improve the human condition. Through its seminar and policy programs, the Institute fosters enlightened, morally responsible leadership and convenes leaders and policy makers to address the foremost challenges of the new century.