

**FINAL BENCH REMARKS
COMMISSIONER SUSAN NESS
Commission Open Meeting
May 10, 2001**

(As prepared for delivery.)

Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Tristani, Commissioner Furchtgott-Roth:

Thank you for your generous comments and your friendship.

This is the last time I will sit on this dais as a Commissioner. For seven years – 90 meetings or so -- I have served on the Federal Communications Commission. It has been an immense honor and privilege to serve the American people in this capacity. I leave with great pride in what we have accomplished and with optimism for what the future portends.

As I think back over the past seven years, I think about the millions of school children that now have Internet access in their classrooms. Seven years ago, only 3% of classrooms were connected; today, 77% of classrooms are connected to the Net.

I think about the fact that more than 100 million Americans enjoy mobile telephone service at competitive rates and that we all have access to a vast assortment of unlicensed wireless products and services.

I think about the broadband revolution that is bringing new, innovative services to more and more Americans.

And I am proud of how we have implemented the 1996 Telecommunications Act, as Congress intended.

Indeed, looking back over the last seven years, one cannot help but be struck by the monumental changes that have swept over the communications landscape. I am immensely proud of the role that we at the Commission have played in decisions that impact every consumer throughout the United States.

Decisions that resonate around the globe.

Last night, as I was saying goodnight to my daughter and son, I thought about how much the world has changed since I was their age and the endless possibilities that await them in the years ahead.

I thought about how so many of the actions we have taken here at the FCC will inexorably impact their lives and the lives of all of our children for years to come.

That is the essence of public service. Knowing that the work you do today will help make the world a better place tomorrow.

While I do not know what the future will bring, I am confident that those who have been nominated to serve at the FCC will do a terrific job. I wish the new members of the Commission all the best under Chairman Powell's able leadership.

So here at my last Commission meeting, I am thankful.

Thankful to have had the opportunity to participate in these issues, and to give something back to my country – to serve the American people.

Thankful to have worked with an exceptional group of officials at this agency – to have served with three remarkable chairmen—you Chairman Powell, Chairman Kennard and Chairman Hundt; and five dedicated commissioners: Commissioners Quello, Barrett, and Chong, Furchtgott Roth and Tristani.

Thankful to have worked with some of the finest public servants in the offices and bureaus throughout the FCC; and

And I am especially thankful to have had over the years such an extraordinary group of advisors and assistants on my personal staff.

The Federal Communications Commission is a unique institution. I have spent some of the best years of my life here. For seven years of memories, for the chance to give back to our national community, and for wonderful friendships, I am forever grateful.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.