

bigger things to come for her. I congratulate Representative Cooper on another outstanding year and wish her success in the future.●

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, we continue to see positive signs reflecting the strength of our national economy. Thirty-year mortgage rates remain low, consumer confidence is high and unemployment is down.

In the midst of these sustained positive trends, America faces new challenges as we approach a new century. Among them: meeting a critical need for skilled technology workers and the continuing effort to move more Americans from welfare to work.

We are an innovative people and I'm confident that we can meet new challenges, in part via public-private partnerships. One of the key people in America advancing the concept of public-private partnerships is Mr. Greg Farmer. As Florida's Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Farmer pioneered public-private partnerships at the state level, doing more with less tax dollars.

Now in the private sector, with Nortel, Mr. Farmer and his company are helping provide high-tech equipment to schools and technology training to help move people from welfare to work. On January 13, 1998, Mr. Farmer testified before the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources. I commend his testimony to my colleagues and all those interested in public-private partnerships as a means of reducing welfare dependency and advancing job training. I respectfully ask that his testimony be printed in the RECORD:

The testimony follows:

STATEMENT OF GREG FARMER, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE, NORTEL

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. My name is Greg Farmer, and I am Vice President for Government Affairs and International Trade for Nortel (Northern Telecom). It gives me pleasure to be with you this morning to discuss some of the things Nortel is doing in the Washington, D.C. area to help prepare inner city youth for a fruitful life beyond high school, whether it be college or acquiring a special skill.

Bell Atlantic is a household word and all of you are certainly familiar with it. You might not be as well acquainted with Nortel (even though—and I hesitate to say this in case you had a telephone problem this morning—the Senate does have our telephone switch). Nortel is the leading global supplier of fully digital network solutions and services. We design, build and integrate digital networks that communicate voice, data, image and video for customers in the information, communications, entertainment, education, government and commerce markets. Our customers are local and long distance telecommunications companies, businesses, universities, governments, cable television companies, competitive local access providers, Internet services providers and other network operators around the world. We operate in 150 countries around the globe. We have more employees in the U.S. than anywhere else. Here, we are based in Nash-

ville, Tennessee and have major state-of-the-art centers—including research and development, manufacturing, semiconductor and software-engineering facilities—in nine other states. And we have sales and services offices in every state of the union. We count Bell Atlantic as a good customer, and I am pleased to be on the panel today with my friend Bill Freeman.

Yesterday the Administration announced a massive public-private effort aimed at high tech training. This was in response to concerns by economists and business leaders that U.S. companies have a critical shortage of skilled technology workers. The initiative, which will include millions of dollars in grants to fund educational programs, comes as a new survey shows that 1 in every 10 information technology jobs in the U.S. is unfulfilled.

This comes as no surprise to Nortel. As with other telecommunications companies, education and workforce development is an essential part of Nortel's overall business strategy. Our industry requires highly skilled workers at even the most basic entry level positions. We are constantly looking for opportunities to work with organizations that provide training and enhance our workforce.

The Administration ought to take a good look at Capital Commitment. It is a stellar example of a high tech training program that works. It is a shiny gem; a diamond in a rusty crown. And I hope some of those grants will go to Capital Commitment so it can continue the incredible success it has enjoyed in the past.

One only need hear the Ricky Mozee story to understand the cascading good this program has for individuals and for our community. Ricky Mozee is a walking, talking welfare-to-work success story. Before finding Capital Commitment in 1992, Ricky was a drug and alcohol abuser, living on welfare in the tough streets of Anacostia. In his own words, he had no future; his family had no future; he was afraid to dream. He was fighting his addictions and looking at an 84 percent unemployment rate in his community. Then he found Capital Commitment. Today, he has a high paying job as a telecommunications supervisor at National Airport. He owns a house in suburban Maryland. He supports a wife and three children. He is a poster boy for what the future could be, if we get it right.

When LaVerne and Ernest Boykin established Capital Commitment in 1991, their vision to train inner city youth in telecommunications and life skills and to facilitate job opportunities for them resonated well with our corporate goals. Since that time, Nortel has been actively involved with Capital Commitment. We have observed a dramatic increase in employment opportunities for the unemployed, under-employed, at risk youth and single parents from the District of Columbia. As a result, we have also observed a significant shift of money from public assistance to taxable income.

In those early days, we worked with the Capital Commitment management team to identify factors critical for their success and discovered their needs went far beyond financial support.

Nortel's support of Capital Commitment since its inception includes:

Providing well over \$1 million in funding, equipment and personnel resources (switches, computers and state-of-the-art office equipment as well as technical expertise, training materials);

Providing management advice and coaching;

Taking the lead in turning Capital Commitment into an industry sponsored organization;

Establishing a fundraising golf tournament;

Working to replicate Capital Commitment in California & Texas;

Serving on Capital Commitment's Board (Stuart Mapes, Nortel's National Director of Minority and Women Business Program).

In addition, I am pleased to announce today that Nortel will donate and install a new Nortel Central Office Switch to be used for advanced training.

We have also worked with Bell Atlantic and other private companies to expand corporate funding of the program. I might add here that one of the most telling successes of this program is the fact that Nortel and other corporate sponsors of Capital Commitment have been diligent in working cooperatively. We work with our customers, such as Bell Atlantic, MCI and Sprint, but also with our competitors, such as Siemens and Lucent, in promoting this program. There is something in it for each of us. Not only does it make us sleep a little easier at night to know that we are being good corporate citizens and helping disadvantaged youth become a part of this dynamic industry; but also, in a cold business sense, we are receiving great benefits too.

Nortel and the telecommunications industry in general are in constant need of highly qualified technical employees. Capital Commitment graduates students who are highly trained in these skills. We have hired over 100 Capital Commitment graduates who have proven to be well trained, competent and reliable employees. As a matter of fact, Capital Commitment graduates have a 90+ percent placement rate and an impressive 80+ percent retention rate! This welfare-to-work program really works.

There is another aspect to this program which is missing from other traditional welfare-to-work programs. The Boykins teach their students critical lifeskills and stress to their students the importance of "paying back" their communities. Many of their graduates return to Capital Commitment to help instruct students, or pay back their communities by being role models for others. So the legacy of Capital Commitment lives on in their graduates and provides long term benefits to the community.

I am committed to spreading the word about Capital Commitment. I have personally taken numerous Administration officials through the program. I found that a tour of Capital Commitment makes believers out of all who go there. My goal is to find sources of federal, state and local funding to help this incredible program expand. I would encourage each of you to take time from your very busy schedules to visit Capital Commitment, which is located a few short miles from here. There is nothing any of us can say to you today that will have the impact a personal visit will have. It will, I know, be time well spent.

We at Nortel believe very strongly that Capital Commitment is an important and solid example of how business can work within the community to provide increased opportunity for movement from welfare-to-work in highly paid, career oriented jobs in a high growth industry. The need for skilled technicians to enter this industry is growing rapidly so it is incumbent upon us to accelerate efforts to assure continued progress for this important program. Capital Commitment provides opportunities for our most disadvantaged citizens to become productive, well paid workers in this dynamic industry.

Having said all of this, there is trouble in paradise. Capital Commitment is a shiny gem but it sits in a rusty crown, badly in need of attention by our policy makers.

We at Nortel believe that corporate-community partnerships are the key to educating and gainfully employing a greater number of high skilled workers. However, there

is a third critically important partner needed in these job training programs if they are to be successful: the government.

I worry that Capital Commitment might not be able to continue because it is lacking financial support of any kind by the government.

It is the government's role to encourage programs which take people who are on welfare and turn them into gainfully employed, responsible citizens who pay taxes and otherwise contribute to their community. This is what Capital Commitment does so well. And the corporate community by all accounts has been extremely generous with financial and other resources to help them achieve this goal. The corporate community benefits from the program; we strongly support the program. And while the Government also has much to gain from these efforts, there has been little effort by the government to encourage this activity.

Capital Commitment is a victim of its own success. Ernest and LaVerne Boykin triumphed in setting up a high quality welfare-to-work program that actually works. It takes people off of welfare and helps them get jobs in a growing industry.

Capital Commitment is a public-private partnership without the public. The government has simply not done its part in encouraging this most successful program.

In my previous two stints at public service, I learned first-hand the benefits of converting traditional governmental functions into public-private partnership.

As Florida's Commerce Secretary I converted several functions within the department to public-private partnerships, including film and motion picture promotion, sports promotion and tourism promotion. Finally the economic development function was converted to a public-private partnership (Enterprise Florida), completely eliminating the Department of Commerce, which might appeal to some of you.

As U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for Travel and Tourism, I convened the first-ever White House Conference on Tourism charged with planning strategy for the industry for the next five years. The number one recommendation was that the agency be converted to a public-private partnership.

The reason is that a public-private partnership leverages maximum resources in the most positive way possible. It achieves the public purpose the government wants to achieve; it brings the discipline of business to the operation; it provides accountability; it is cost effective by nature because business simply will not be a part of something which is not effective. History shows public-private partnerships are almost always more effective in terms of achievement and cost than government working alone.

As an aside, you may all be aware that there is an effort underway in D.C. to revive a plan endorsed by the White House to create a National Capital Revitalization Corporation, a separate legal entity that would oversee development activities in struggling commercial areas across the city. The corporation, a public-private partnership, would be charged with drafting a strategic economic development plan for the city and would have the power to acquire property, issue bonds and conduct other activities which would ensure economic growth happens.

I endorse this plan because I believe there is no where else in this country that needs a public-private effort to revitalize the economy more than the District of Columbia.

Capital Commitment would fit well into this new economic plan. But what we have with Capital Commitment now is a public-private partnership in which the public has not been present. The results have a tremen-

dous public return. Over 500 former welfare recipients now are earning high wages, paying taxes and contributing to the economic development of their communities. A proven success record. Yet there has been precious little government investment and apparently no realization of the value this program has in achieving a critical government goal.

Before I conclude, let me briefly tell you about some of our other efforts to be helpful in D.C.

Nortel recognizes that computer-based learning is crucial in preparing our students for the 21st Century. So, 18 months ago, we began a program to assist the D.C. school system. We began by providing computers to Burrville Elementary and Hine Junior High School. Nortel also provided the expertise and training necessary to ensure the computers were operable and the teachers knew how to instruct the children. Access to the Internet was an essential ingredient. The computers were most successful at Burrville and Hine, well run schools with excellent teachers and children eager to learn. However, we soon learned that much more needed to be done.

To respond to this need, we assembled a coalition of federal and city government officials and private corporations aimed at providing inner city D.C. schools with computers, software and Internet access. We met to discuss how, working together, we could provide on an ongoing basis, computers, access to the Internet, software and technical support to inner city schools. It soon became apparent, however, that there was no accounting system for tracking what the D.C. schools presently have or what they need. So we had to start from scratch. Before we could be truly helpful, we first needed to get a handle on what the D.C. school system already had, what was working and what was not and exactly what was needed. A more structured organization was required.

This led to the creation of Partners in Technology (PIT), a non-profit foundation established to foster technology-based public-private partnerships in the D.C. school system. I am pleased to serve as Chairman of the Board of PIT.

The goal of PIT is to improve the quality of education in our local educational institutions by increasing the level and maximizing the impact of community investments made by the private sector. We learned from experience that to be most effective takes more than just donating equipment.

PIT is funded by corporate charter members and is seeking matching funding for programs and operations from private, public and federal sources.

Although in its infancy, PIT—in partnership with the District Branch of Tech Corps—has already initiated:

Researching and developing plans for an "acceptable" standard work station/computer that will meet the overall education needs of the student. This includes working closely with the D.C. Public Schools in providing assistance and consultation on strategic planning and inventory management. For instance, PIT is in discussions with DC Tech Corps in looking at ways to develop effective technology training programs for the faculty. PIT understands it cannot be effective unless we have trained educators that can and want to teach students how to use the tools of technology in order to enhance their education.

Establishing a pilot project which is being tested to allow schools to turn over obsolete computer equipment for a credit by a computer remanufacturer. This credit may be used to purchase state-of-the-art equipment and comprehensive computer training for teachers. In addition, local non-profit re-

manufacturers have expressed an interest in working to provide repair training and intern opportunities for D.C. students in the schools and at their facilities.

Coordinating the establishment of a computer program within the D.C. public schools which will establish student clubs with faculty-adult supervision.

These are just a few of the activities already undertaken by PIT. High on our list is to assist the D.C. Public Schools in compiling an accurate inventory of all computer/phone equipment and systems. This will include an inventory of each school's human and corporate resources. This is a critical step in providing the necessary information for intelligent and effective planning.

We plan to be more active as we develop and believe we can become a highly effective link for the D.C. public schools. We want to ensure that D.C. has the computer equipment they need and the teachers have the resources they need to ensure proper operation of the equipment, access to the super highway and training so D.C. students are assured of having a good, solid education which will prepare them for a good future.

We have coupled our efforts with Capital Commitment and PIT. Capital Commitment has arranged office space for PIT in its facility, and we have provided computers for both organizations to enhance their effectiveness.

Again, thank you for allowing me to present to you this morning to discuss these two important programs, both of which could be easily transported to other parts of the country where there is also critical need.

We encourage other corporations to join us in ensuring that organizations like Capital Commitment and PIT are securely funded. And we would also encourage our policy makers to take a careful look at programs like these for government funding. These are programs where a little bit of funding can go a very long way in enhancing economic development to the betterment of all citizens.

We need to provide the shiny gem that is Capital Commitment with a gleaming crown so it can beacon far and wide to others who can copy this program and get into the business of turning lives around.

I would be happy to answer any questions.●

BRUCE AND KATHY CONTWAY

● Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to commend two Montana artists for their dedication and talent.

In the West, we are accustomed to western art whether in the form of a Charlie Russell painting or a Frederick Remington bronze. But today I would like to recognize the future of Western bronze sculpture art defining our nation's roots and the hardy souls who lived off the land and gave us the rich history that will always be a part of our nation's beginning.

Bruce and Kathy Contway of Whitehall, Montana, have helped to preserve that history as well as to find their own place in history as American artists. These two artists are becoming well-known internationally for their abilities and their works celebrating a colorful Native American and Old West past. Their art has helped to make accessible to all of us the distinctive culture and customs of this nation's first inhabitants.

The Contways, have certainly earned the honors they have received. Their dedication and hard work were recently rewarded when they each received the admiration of their peers and fans alike.