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privacy

THE CLINTON-GORE ADMINISTRATION: PROTECTING OUR PRIVACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

May 14, 1998

Today, Vice President Gore speaks at New York University's commencement. In his remarks, the Vice President announces that the Clinton Administration is proposing a comprehensive privacy action plan that will give people more control over their own personal information.

A COMPREHENSIVE PRIVACY PLAN. As technology becomes more sophisticated, the risk people face from the disclosure of personal and confidential information grows. Computers and the Internet are tools which aid us in our everyday life, but can also be used by those who wish to gain private information about us. The Clinton Administration's privacy action plan calls for:

- Legislation restricting how individual medical records are disclosed and how people can find out about their use,
- The launch of an "opt-out" Web site which would allow individuals to prevent personal information from being passed to others;
- A "privacy summit" which will include members of the Administration and industry officials, who will discuss privacy issues on the Internet.

PROTECTING MEDICAL PRIVACY. The Administration will submit legislation to Congress which restricts how and when individuals' medical records can be used, gives people the right to be informed about their records, and allows them the opportunity to correct their records.

ONE STOP OPT-OUT. The Administration's plan creates a Website sponsored by the Federal Trade Commission which will enable individuals to prohibit companies from pre-screening their credit records without their permission, prevent drivers license data from being sold to data miners, and allow individuals to have their names and addresses removed from data-mailing and telemarketing lists.

ENSURING APPROPRIATE USE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DATA. The President has signed a Memorandum to agency heads, effective today, that requires federal agencies to ensure that new technologies do not erode Privacy Act protections while also examining how new technologies can be used to enhance personal privacy. It also calls for a thorough agency-by-agency review of existing privacy practices, and directs the Office of Management and Budget to conduct a review and issue guidance ways agencies can protect privacy information, especially when they collaborate with state and local governments.

PRIVACY SUMMIT. To fully understand and address the complex issues involved with privacy in the Information Age, the Commerce Department will convene a Summit on Privacy to bring privacy and consumer advocates together with industry officials to explore the feasibility and limitations of the application of self regulation to the Internet and to focus on children's privacy.