

THANK YOU DR. (Larry) SCHNACK, FOR THAT FINE INTRODUCTION AND FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP AS HEAD OF THIS COMMISSION. THANK YOU TO ALL THE COMMISSIONERS FOR YOUR TIRELESS WORK AND DEDICATION TO THIS EFFORT.

I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO ACCEPT THIS REPORT THAT FINDS THE STATE OF WISCONSIN IS IN OUTSTANDING SHAPE AS WE APPROACH THE MILLENNIUM DATE CHANGE.

WE ARE LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS AWAY FROM AN EXCITING CELEBRATION ... THE BEGINNING OF NEXT MILLENNIUM. BY MY CALCULATIONS, THE RINGING IN OF THE YEAR 2000 WILL BE 1,000 TIMES AS JOYOUS AS YOUR RUN-OF-THE-MILL NEW YEAR'S EVE, AND 10 TIMES BETTER THAN THE TYPICAL TURN OF CENTURY.

YES, JANUARY 1, 2000 WILL BE A MEMORABLE DAY... NOT ONLY AS THE START OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, BUT ALSO AS A DAY THAT WILL DISPEL ALL THE DOOMSDAY PREDICTIONS.

I DON'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT ANYONE, BUT WHEN THE BALL DROPS IN TIMES SQUARE ON JANUARY 1 AT 12:01 A.M., AIRPLANES WON'T FALL FROM THE SKY, THE EARTH WILL NOT SPIRAL INTO THE SUN, AND IT WON'T RAIN CATS AND DOGS.

IN SUMMARY, THE END IS NOT NEAR.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THERE WON'T BE ANY GLITCHES OR POSSIBLE INCONVENIENCES. HOWEVER, IN A SOCIETY WHERE OVER HALF OF THE VCR'S BLINK 12:00, WE HAVE PROVEN THAT WE CAN PERSEVERE IN THE FACE OF NUISANCE.

AS THIS REPORT STATES, NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO ENDANGER THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE CITIZENS OF WISCONSIN, OR DISRUPT OUR LIVES. ANY PROBLEMS SHOULD BE BRIEF AND LOCALIZED.

IN FACT, THE BIGGEST DIFFICULTY MIGHT BE THE ACTIONS OF SOME SELFISH CITIZENS WHO PANIC AND HOARD FOOD AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS, STOCKPILE FUEL, OR WITHDRAWAL LARGE SUMS OF CASH FROM THEIR BANKS.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT Y2K IS NOT A PROBLEM. TO THE CONTRARY, THE Y2K BUG IS VERY REAL, AND I WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE OUTCOME WHEN THE COMMITTEE BEGAN WORK MORE THAN A YEAR AGO.

BUT, THE AMOUNT OF WORK THAT HAS GONE ON STATEWIDE IS REMARKABLE, AND AS THIS REPORT SHOWS, WISCONSIN IS IN GREAT SHAPE OVERALL FOR THE CENTURY DATE CHANGE.

THE REASON WISCONSIN IS IN SUCH GOOD SHAPE IS BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY PROACTIVE IN OUR READINESS. I MADE Y2K THE STATE'S NUMBER ONE BUSINESS PRIORITY.

IN ADDITION, ON JULY 27 OF LAST YEAR, I ESTABLISHED THIS COMMISSION TO STUDY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE EVERYONE'S PREPAREDNESS.

I ASSIGNED THE COMMISSION TO:

- PROVIDE STRUCTURE AND FOCUS ACROSS BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO ADDRESS YEAR 2000 ISSUES.
- SAFEGUARD AGAINST MAJOR BUSINESS DISRUPTION THROUGH CONTINGENCY PLANNING.
- AND HEIGHTEN PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE STATE OF YEAR 2000 PREPAREDNESS.

BECAUSE OF THE STATE'S PROACTIVENESS AND THE COMMISSION'S DILIGENCE, I AM PROUD TO SAY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INFRASTRUCTURE IS WELL PREPARED FOR THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM. WE ALL WORKED TOGETHER AS PARTNERS TO MAKE SURE THAT Y2K WILL BE A MANAGEABLE PROBLEM. BANKING, UTILITIES AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES WILL CONTINUE UNINTERRUPTED.

OUR READINESS SHOULDN'T COME AS A SURPRISE. IN THE LAST DECADE, OUR STATE HAS CONSISTENTLY CONFRONTED AND DEALT WITH THE TOUGH PROBLEMS OF THE DAY HEAD-ON.

FROM REPLACING WELFARE WITH WORK AND GETTING TOUGH WITH JUVENILE CRIMINALS, TO IMPROVING EDUCATION, CREATING JOBS AND PROVIDING RECORD EMPLOYMENT, WE HAVE SHUNNED THE OLD... ADOPTED THE BOLD... EMBRACED THE INNOVATIVE...DISCARDED THE OUTDATED.

AS WE STAND AT THE THRESHOLD OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN IN THE NEXT CENTURY.

AS LONG AS WISCONSIN IS BLESSED WITH FORWARD LOOKING, FOREWORD THINKING INDIVIDUALS LIKE THE COMMISSION MEMBERS, OUR STATE WILL CONTINUE TO OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE PLACED IN OUR WAY AND MORE FORWARD... OUR STATE MOTTO.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches.

THANK YOU.