

For Further Information Contact:

Michele Woodward
703-598-3100
Woodward.michele@gmail.com

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INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE RONALD REAGAN CENTENNIAL COMMISSION AT U.S. CAPITOL

Appoints Chairman, Executive Director and Approves Period of Public Comment

WASHINGTON – The Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission held its inaugural meeting yesterday in the U.S. Capitol building to begin developing plans for review of activities to honor Ronald Reagan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth on February 6, 2011.

The twelve member Centennial Commission was created by an act of Congress and signed in June 2009 by President Obama, with Mrs. Nancy Reagan at his side, at the White House. Since 1950, Congress on ten separate occasions has established a commission to develop plans to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of an American President or First Lady. As President Reagan would have wanted it, no Federal dollars were appropriated to fund the events of the Centennial.

As its first order of business the Commission approved Fred Ryan, President and COO of Allbritton Communications and Chairman of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation, as its Chairman.

“The bipartisan composition of this Commission is a fitting tribute to President Reagan, who was always ready to reach across the aisle,” said Mr. Ryan. “I want to thank my fellow Commissioners for electing me their chairman, and I look forward to working with them in the months ahead as we prepare to celebrate the 100th birthday of one of America’s most beloved Presidents.”

The 12-member Commission includes:

Kenneth L. Salazar, U.S. Secretary of Interior
Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator from California
Jim Webb, U.S. Senator from Virginia
Robert F. Bennett, U.S. Senator from Utah
George William Foster, U.S. Congressman from IL-14
Dennis Moore, U.S. Congressman from KS-03
Elton W. Gallegly, U.S. Congressman from CA-24

Frederick J. Ryan, President and COO, Allbritton Communications
Peggy Noonan, Columnist, *The Wall Street Journal*
Fred Smith, Chairman, Donald W. Reynolds Foundation
John F.W. Rogers, Managing Director, Goldman Sachs
David S. Ferriero, Archivist of the United States, ex-officio

“More than twenty years ago, President Reagan inspired this nation after a period of extraordinary turmoil and self-doubt,” said Sen. Jim Webb, who served in the Reagan Administration as the inaugural Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and as Secretary of the Navy. “It is fitting that we reexamine his legacy today as our nation faces serious challenges at home and abroad.”

“As the representative of Ronald Reagan’s birthplace in Tampico and boyhood home in Dixon, I am thrilled that Illinois will play a central role in the Reagan Centennial Celebration,” said Rep. Bill Foster. “Today’s inaugural meeting laid the foundation for the work that lies ahead of us to honor the life and legacy of Ronald Reagan on the 100th anniversary of his birth.”

The Commission also approved the appointment of Michele Woodward, a former White House staff member during the Reagan Administration, as its Executive Director.

As specified in the Act passed by Congress the Commission is responsible for planning and developing Centennial activities; providing advice and assistance to federal, state and local agencies carrying out their own Centennial activities; and determining whether activities carried out by the Federal Government are fitting and proper to honor Ronald Reagan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth.

The Commission has established a period of public comment to begin on September 1, 2010, and end on December 1, 2010. During this time, the Commission encourages interested federal, state, and local agencies as well as private organizations planning to honor our fortieth President to offer ideas and proposals on the Reagan Centennial. Those interested may contact Michele Woodward at woodward.michele@gmail.com for further details.

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