THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

AUG 20 2001

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Markey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the management and administration of the .us domain. I agree with you that issues concerning the .us domain are extremely important.

I want to assure you that the Department of Commerce is committed to being a responsible steward for the .us domain. Contrary to recent press reports, the Department has made no proposal and has no plan to relinquish U.S. Government interest in the .us domain. Rather, our current Request for Quotations (RFQ) for .us management services seeks to acquire a responsible party, accountable to the Department through a federal contract, to replace the current domain manager and to help develop the .us domain into a more vibrant, useful, and reliable space for all Americans.

The RFQ outlines several specific tasks and functions that, at a minimum, the contractor must perform to bring important and substantial benefits to the American people. In addition, it invites prospective contractors to propose any additional services and functions they wish to perform in fulfilling this project. Because the RFQ was open to all bidders, including not-for-profit organizations, we believe that the proposals we have received reflect a wide range of creative offers. The Department is committed to selecting the proposal that represents the overall best value and greatest benefit to the American people.

While the closing date for our RFQ was July 27, actual bidder selection will not take place until after the proposals are fully reviewed and considered. At this time, we do not expect to finalize our review, selection, and contract negotiation process until October 2001. I assure you that this contract award will continue to have the attention of senior Department officials, including Nancy Victory, the recently confirmed Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

It is important to note that the Department's current contract with an outside vendor for .us management services extends only through November 10, 2001. Our process to identify a new manager, and to define the goals and responsibilities of that manager, has been guided by well over two years of public dialogue on .us issues, including several rounds of public comments and a hearing. These discussions benefited from participation by a broad range of interest groups and individuals. We will continue to ensure that the needs of the American people, including both current and future .us registrants, are taken into account.

Thank you for sharing your views on this matter with me. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me or Brenda Becker, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at (202) 482-3663.

Warm regards,

Donald L. Evans