

Good morning. Thank you for coming.

It is my pleasure to announce that Jim Bernstein is the new commissioner of the Department of Commerce.

First off, though, I'd like to thank the Search Committee that helped with identifying and screening candidates. Dorothy Bridges, Paul Aasen, John Diehl, Priscilla McNulty and Corinne Shepherd—job well done.

In the end we found the best person for the job right here in our own backyard.

Jim was a true professional throughout the search process. Not knowing his fate and serving as temporary commissioner, Jim continued Commerce's day-to-day business without missing a beat and has advanced my administration's work on telecommunications and other important matters.

I picked Jim for many reasons, but his continued impressive work put him over the top.

Jim joined the department in 1999 as deputy commissioner under Commissioner Steve Minn. He was responsible for the department's strategic planning and policy development and has been directly involved in issues relating to energy, insurance and other financial services.

Jim knows what is expected of him as one of my commissioners. He has demonstrated the enthusiasm and ability to follow through on "Big Plan" initiatives.

I'd like to introduce to you the new "*permanent*" Commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Jim Bernstein.