

- I am very pleased to welcome you all to Minnesota today. To see so many states, manufacturers and organizations committed to this product stewardship initiative gives me great confidence in your success.
- In the last few years, Minnesota's Office of Environmental Assistance has developed partnerships with leading electronics manufacturers such as Panasonic, Sony and Sharp to find ways to get old computers and TVs out of the garbage and recycled into new products.
- Best Buy has also stepped forward, first in Minnesota and now in other states, with help from government and manufacturers, to offer people an opportunity to bring old electronics back for recycling.
- Together, we've made great strides in promoting a shared approach that calls on manufacturers, retailers, government and consumers to treat these old products as resources rather than waste. We've started to determine what programs are most effective and easiest for people to use.
- But this is not a problem that can be solved by a few states or a few companies.
- We're all facing the same issues with consumer electronics. We all want the latest technology. It makes our lives easier. It removes boundaries and helps connect us.
- But having the latest technology means that we need to deal with all the products that are obsolete or no longer used. It means that we need to design and manage products so that they never become a burden on the environment, or on the taxpayers, and so we don't waste valuable resources.
- When the right parties take responsibility for designing products differently, for establishing collection systems and developing markets for materials, then you don't just solve a problem, you create opportunities.
- We anticipate that the solutions you establish through NEPSI will work not just for a few states or a few companies, but for the whole country. I look forward to congratulating you all next year when you've shown that a voluntary product stewardship approach can achieve lasting results.