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Bob Michel and Bill Richardson of The National Commission on Federal Election Reform To Testify in Congress

CoChairman Robert Michel and Commissioner Bill Richardson of the nonpartisan National Commission on Federal Election Reform, will testify before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation on Tuesday, May 8th. Senator John McCain will preside at this full committee hearing as it considers election reform and the reliability of current and future voting technologies. The hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The National Commission on Federal Election Reform was organized in early 2001 by the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs and The Century Foundation. Independent and nonpartisan, the Commission receives no public funds. It is supported by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The goal of the Commission is to formulate concrete proposals for election reform that will help ensure a more effective and fair democratic process in elections to come. It hopes to issue recommendations in early Fall of 2001. Michel and Richardson are not strangers to the Hill. Michel, House Republican Minority Leader, served in the House from 1956 to 1994, and Richardson, former Clinton Secretary of Energy and Ambassador to the UN, served for eight terms.

The Commission is examining a broad agenda of topics during the course of its work and is half way through its four public hearings to help inform its thinking and decision making. The hearings feature testimony from experts in the field, elected leaders, interest group representatives, and scholars. The next hearing: *What Does the Law Require?* will be held on May 24th at the Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum in Austin, TX. Fomer President Gerald R. Ford will chair Hearing 4, *The American and International Experience* will be held on June 5th at Ford Library in Ann Arbor, MI. The first two hearings were: *Citizen Participation*, held on March 26th, at The Carter Center in Atlanta, GA (at which fomer President Carter presided); and *Election Administration* on April 12th, at The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, CA.

The Commission is evaluating a great variety of proposals, including those which would address:

- Voting techniques and ballot design, whether with suggestions and subsidies or with minimum national and statewide standards;
- The breadth and integrity of voter registration;
- The timing of federal elections and release of election results;
- Problems that have arisen with respect to absentee and overseas military votes;
- Rules and procedures for contesting and recounting results of elections for federal offices;
- New technology for conducting elections; and
- New institutions, or a strengthened version existing ones that would oversee progress toward a more standardized and modernized federal election process.

For more information on the Commission, its task forces, its hearing agendas, as well as live and on-dem and hearing webcasts and transcripts, visit www.reformelections.org.