

**Nomination of Ms. Cathy MacFarlane to be
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Hearing Before the United States Senate Committee on Banking,
Housing and Urban Affairs**



April 21, 2004

Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Sarbanes, and distinguished Members of the Committee:

Thank you for inviting me to appear before you today with my colleagues, Assistant Secretary Roy Bernardi and Dennis Shea.

I am honored to be President Bush and HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson's nominee for Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at HUD, and I am grateful for the confidence they have shown in me.

Joining me today are my parents, Joe and Mary MacFarlane, and numerous dear friends. I would like to add a special word of appreciation to them as well.

The responsibility of directing the public affairs office of a federal agency is a serious one, but not a new one to me. During my tenure as Director for the Federal Trade Commission's office of public affairs, the "Do Not Call" registry was authorized by Congress and the task of educating the American public about how to stop telemarketers from contacting them fell into my lap. Together with a staff of seven of the finest PR professionals in the federal government, we reached out to every newspaper, radio station and broadcast outlet in the country. Six months after the "Do Not Call" registry was launched, more than 55 million people heard our message and registered. Recently, a Harris poll survey documented that the "Do Not Call" Registry had name recognition with 92% of the American public.

I'm here today to tell you that, if confirmed, I intend to make certain that the good news about HUD's programs reach the eyes and ears of the people who most need to benefit from them. Every day HUD programs assist low-income families find safe and affordable shelter, they help first-time homebuyers make their dreams of homeownership a reality, and they provide a means for individuals to move from government dependency to self-sufficiency. HUD's programs are carried out by the Executive branch, but we well understand that they are written here, in Congress. And legislation enacted by Congress has opened the door to homeownership for millions of Americans.

I am very proud to be the nominee for Public Affairs at HUD. With the support of this Committee, I look forward to assisting in the important work of keeping America informed about the federal government's housing and community development policies.

Mr. Chairman and Senators, thank you for your courtesy in listening to my remarks. I'd be happy to take any questions you may have.