

K. Dane Snowden, Chief, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Remarks for Broadcast Ownership hearings
Richmond, Virginia
February 27, 2003

Good morning. On behalf of the Commission I would like to welcome everyone to the FCC's Broadcast Ownership en banc hearing. In addition, the Commission extends its thanks and appreciation to all of the invited panelists and the members of the public for joining us from the Richmond area and from across the country.

As many of you know, the Commission is in the midst of its most comprehensive review of the FCC's broadcast ownership rules, some of which date back to the early 1940s. Every two years the Commission is required by Congress to examine its broadcast ownership rules and determine whether the rules are necessary in the public interest as the result of competition. If a rule cannot be justified, it must be modified or eliminated.

Today's en banc hearing is another example of how the Commission is interacting with the public on this very important subject. In addition to participating in the public forum sponsored by Columbia University, we have received more than 18,000 comments on this subject, the vast majority of which are from individual citizens.

Our goal today is to hear from the public on the important issue of Broadcast Ownership currently before the Commission. It should be noted that the Commission's ultimate task in fulfilling its public interest responsibility is to promote diversity, localism and competition. In addition, we must craft rules that are sustainable in the eyes of the courts.

We are very interested in learning how the three prongs of diversity, localism and competition are promoted under our current broadcast ownership regime. As the FCC designs rules, we strive to establish a framework which accounts for the modern day marketplace. All of this stated, it is important to note that, by the end of this proceeding, the FCC intends to have broadcast ownership rules that reflect the current marketplace and are legally sustainable.

Before we begin with our moderator and the panels, I would first like to turn the floor over to the Chairman and Commissioners for their opening remarks.

This morning, we will hear from three panels on the specific themes of Diversity, Localism and Competition. The panels will be moderated by Tom Krattenmaker, who will first summarize the key broadcast ownership rules and issues.

Before I introduce Mr. Krattenmaker, let me briefly describe the two ways we have provided for members of the public to participate directly in today's program. First, while the panelists are speaking, members of the public are invited to write down any questions for them on the index cards located on the tables at the back of the room. Those cards will be collected during the panel presentations. The questions will be forwarded to Tom, who will pose them to the appropriate panelists following their

opening statements.

Second, we have set aside 30 minutes at the end of each panel as a public comment period. Members of the public are invited to use the open mic that will be set up on the right side of the room to offer comments regarding the pending rulemaking proceeding. If you are not able to express your comments today, you are welcome to submit them as part of the record in the pending broadcast ownership rulemaking proceeding. To file your comments electronically, go to www.fcc.gov and follow the instructions for ECFS Express, which is located on the left side of the FCC's webpage.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce our program moderator, Tom Krattenmaker. Tom is Senior Counsel in the Washington office of Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo, where he focuses on telecommunications transactions and antitrust representation and counseling. Prior to joining Mintz Levin, Tom was Director of Research in the FCC's Office of Plans and Policy under Chairman William Kennard. In that position, Tom oversaw the Commission's staff review and recommendations to the Commission regarding telephone, cable and satellite industry mergers. Before joining the Commission, Tom served as Special Counsel for Policy and Regulatory Affairs in the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. There he oversaw review of several mergers and other transactions in regulated industries. Tom also clerked for Justice John Harlan of the U.S. Supreme Court, and spent several years in academia. He was professor of law and Associate Dean at Georgetown University as well as Dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary. He has also taught at the University of Connecticut School of Law and at the University of Natal (Durban) in South Africa.

We are honored and pleased to have Tom join us today and moderate our panel discussions.