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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC CHAIRMAN MICHAEL POWELL ANNOUNCES CREATION OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

Washington, D.C. - FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell today announced the creation of a Media Ownership Working Group that will be tasked with developing a solid factual and analytical foundation for media ownership regulation. The findings of this Working Group will provide an empirical and analytical basis for the FCC to achieve its long-standing goals of promoting diversity, localism, and competition in the media. Powell made this announcement at a media ownership policy roundtable that was held today.

Chairman Powell said, "Rebuilding the factual foundation of the Commission's media ownership regulations is one of my top priorities. For too long, the Commission has made sweeping media policy decisions without a contemporaneous picture of the media market. We need to rigorously examine whether current forms of media regulation are achieving the Commission's policy objectives, and how changes in regulations would affect the policy goals of competition, diversity, and localism. I am creating the Media Ownership Working Group to bring a sharp focus to these tasks."

The members of the working group include:

W. Kenneth Ferree, Chief of Cable Services Bureau
Paul Gallant, Special Advisor to the Bureau Chief, Cable Services Bureau
Nandan Joshi, Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel
Jonathan Levy, Deputy Chief Economist, FCC
Robert Ratcliffe, Deputy Chief, Mass Media Bureau
David Sappington, Chief Economist, FCC
Royce Dickens Sherlock, Deputy Chief, Policy Division, Cable Services Bureau

Chairman Powell emphasized the importance of policymakers having a clear and informed understanding of the current state of the market. "The first step toward a more contemporary regulatory regime is to strengthen our understanding of the media market. What media choices do consumers have? What are the business realities of different delivery systems? How is innovation in media technology affected by FCC regulation? Conducting an empirical examination of these types of questions will give us a solid foundation to re-evaluate the way we regulate media companies."

Powell said that the group will work with other staff members on current and future media ownership proceedings and that the group's findings will be a part of those proceedings.

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For more information about the FCC Media Ownership Working Group, visit www.fcc.gov/ownership.