

Separate Statement of Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

Re: Annual Assessment of the Status of Competition in the Market for the Delivery of Video Programming, Notice of Inquiry

I support this Notice, which seeks to gather information for the Commission to use in compiling our 11th annual report to Congress on the status of competition in the delivery of video programming. Video programming delivery involves an intricate web of relationships, yet Congress clearly recognized the power of competition to give consumers more choices, lower prices, better services, and diverse sources. Congress also foresaw the need for the Commission to monitor such competition vigilantly.

Today's Notice is a comprehensive and appropriate way to start. It contains meaningful questions which, if answered fully and accurately, would be useful for the Commission in fulfilling our statutory duty. I'm particularly pleased that we have a section that focuses on pertinent issues facing rural and smaller markets. It's also appropriate that the Commission branch out and report on the vertical integration between programmers and all major media companies.

Given the technological transformations upon us, it is more important than ever that the Commission gather the necessary information on which we and the Congress can make appropriate policy determinations. Many in Congress have been asking for a deeper understanding of the factors that underlie cable pricing and competition, and the consequences for consumers.

I have expressed concern with the analytical depth of some of the information that the Commission has presented in the past. The Commission today commits to be more proactive in using outside sources and, if need be, undertaking a rulemaking proceeding to gather complete and meaningful data on which to base our analyses. We should strive to make sure that we are doing all that an expert agency can to adequately grasp and relay to Congress the dynamic aspects of the video programming delivery market.