

SEPARATE STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER KEVIN J. MARTIN

Re: Children's Television Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters, Report and Order, MM Docket No. 00-167 (September 9, 2004)

I'm pleased to support this Order promoting children's programming on digital television. I recognize that the action we take today will increase the obligations placed on broadcasters, but I also recognize the vital role that broadcasters play in serving the interests of children—and their parents. We therefore take steps to ensure the continuation of our children's programming guidelines as well as facilitate parents' ability actually to find the programming.

Parents often complain that there is not enough broadcast programming that is suited for family viewing. This is why I have long advocated a return of the Family Viewing Hour. While the new guidelines we adopt today may not increase the amount of programming that appeals to the whole family, it is certainly a step in the right direction for parents and their children. It is my hope that broadcasters take advantage of improvements in technology and compression to devote even more time and ingenuity to family or children's programming. For example, they might create an exclusively "family TV" or "kids TV" channel on one of their multicast streams. Such a channel could also employ exciting, educational interactive features. I therefore look forward to exploring in the Further Notice the ways in which we can encourage flexibility and interactivity without sacrificing the accessibility of children's programming or opening the door to creeping commercialization.