



NEWS

**Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554**

News media Information 202 / 418-0500
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830
TTY 202/418-2555
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

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).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 17, 2005

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT
Lauren "Pete" Belvin 202-418-2400

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER KATHLEEN Q. ABERNATHY ANNOUNCING HER DEPARTURE FROM THE FCC

Yesterday I sent a letter to President Bush thanking him for the profound privilege and honor of serving on the Federal Communications Commission and informing him of my intention to leave the Commission on December 9, 2005.

During my 4 ½-year tenure the Commission has achieved a great deal. First and foremost, our decisions increasingly reflect the wisdom of relying on competition, rather than regulation, as the best means of assuring that consumers get the telecommunications services they want at affordable rates.

Our largely market-driven approach to advanced services has helped create a vibrant market for new wired and wireless telecommunications products, and our spectrum reform initiatives have improved our ability to put this scarce resource to its most effective use. And I am particularly pleased that as Chair of the ITU's 2004 Global Symposium for Regulators I was able to share our competition-based philosophy with regulators from other countries.

Implicit in the Commission's competition-oriented approach to telecommunications regulation is a recognition of the fact that competition is a journey. It is a journey in which there are winners and losers, change and upheaval, and no clear destination where all things are settled and all competitors are satisfied. Our effort to create greater regulatory symmetry between cable and telephone company providers of advanced high-speed broadband networks is but one example of that process.

The Commission's decisions have also embodied the understanding that competitive markets depend on empowered consumers. Where consumers have choices, and the ability to make them, pervasive regulation is unnecessary. In line with this realization, we targeted regulation to those comparatively few situations in which marketplace competition and informed consumer choice do not increase consumer welfare. For that reason, we have taken steps to make sure that emergency communications work reliably for us and for those who protect us, and we have provided parents with the information and tools needed to control their childrens' multichannel TV viewing choices.

All of our successes, and even our failures, demonstrate one fundamental truth: that regulation is most effective when it deals with markets as they are -- not as they might once have been, and not as we would ideally like them to be. To the extent the Commission's decisions on difficult issues in the days to come are based on this principle, it will continue to advance the security and well-being of our country and our people.

It has been my privilege to work during my term with five gifted public servants, Chairman Kevin Martin, Chairman Michael Powell, Commissioner Michael Copps, Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein, and Commissioner Gloria Tristani. I greatly appreciate their dedication and their friendship. I also want to thank all of those who served on my personal staff throughout my term for their commitment, their intellectual curiosity, and their loyalty.

Above all, I am grateful beyond measure to the bedrock of this agency, the Commission's career staff. In my judgment, they rank second to none in their professionalism, expertise, and hard work. I will always remember the pleasure of working with them in a number of different capacities over the course of the last two decades, and I will never forget how essential they are to all the Commission's achievements.

- FCC -