

**Remarks of FCC Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Ceremony Honoring Dr. Benjamin Hooks
Washington, D.C.
July 19, 2006**

As Prepared For Delivery

Dr. and Mrs. Hooks and distinguished guests, it is a pleasure to be with you here today.

I want to echo the sentiments of my colleagues and thank Dr. Hooks for making America a better place.

While at the FCC and during his years of service at the NAACP, Dr. Hooks was a pioneer for minority rights at a time when it was anything but the popular course. He opened doors and broke down barriers for minorities in the broadcast world, even though he was sometimes criticized by the very groups whose causes he championed.

But as an ardent defender of the Constitution, Dr. Hooks once said that “even if it hurts sometimes, I’m a great believer in free speech and would never do to anything to tamper with it.”

He set a great example of placing the long term public interest first, even in the face of opposition by those who would, in the long run, benefit.

So today is a great opportunity to thank Dr. Hooks for taking the world of broadcast television beyond “black and white” to a regulatory environment that encouraged fair representation “in living color.”

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