

**NASHVILLE MEDIA OWNERSHIP FIELD HEARING
STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE**

I am extremely pleased to welcome the Chairman, my fellow commissioners, our distinguished panelists, and all members of the audience to my hometown for this hearing. I certainly hope that you will find time while you are here in Nashville to enjoy some Southern hospitality and visit a few of the landmarks that make this city such a great place to live: the Grand Ole Opry, Music Row, the Hermitage, or the brand new, state-of-the-art, and aesthetically stunning Schermerhorn Symphony Hall.

Before we begin, there are many people I need to thank. You've already heard from a few of them: Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Belmont University President Robert Fisher, and our Mayor – my good friend – Bill Purcell. Dr. Fisher, I am very grateful to you and Belmont University for your generosity in hosting us today at this fantastic facility. And, Mayor Purcell, I must congratulate you on being named Mayor of the Year by *Governing Magazine*. I should also note that, later this afternoon, we'll have the pleasure of hearing from Congressman Jim Cooper and Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn.

It really is hard to think of a more appropriate location than “Music City, USA” to discuss issues concerning our broadcast media ownership rules, especially as they affect the music industry. Nashville is home to more than 80 record labels, 130 music publishers, 180 recording studios, and some 5,000 working union musicians. According to a study released earlier this year, the total economic impact of this vibrant industry on our local economy is staggering – more than \$6.3 billion annually. Many of the members of this tremendous creative community – some of whom are here today as panelists – also live in Nashville and give back to their community in a number of ways. And, ultimately, our music is at the very heart of our cultural heritage and the legacy that we will leave to future generations. We should do all we can to protect our national musical treasures and ensure the continuing viability of an economic model that encourages their creation.

As we review our rules, however, we must be mindful of the ongoing, dramatic changes in the ways we use the media to receive our news, information, and entertainment. For example, new platforms for the distribution of music have appeared and grown over the last few years. XM and Sirius have signed up millions of subscribers, and iPods and other digital music players are used by millions more, including 1 in 5 people under the age of 30. Increases in broadband penetration have transformed the Internet into a viable platform for streaming full-length video programming, with more content moving online daily at sites like YouTube. And our mobile phones now provide us with stock quotes and e-mail updates from sources across the globe. We are here today to listen to your thoughts on these issues regarding the future of music, the future of video, the effects of the digital age, the Internet, and the possibility of other new and innovative technologies.

Thank you again to all those here at Belmont University and to our FCC staff who worked so hard to make this hearing possible. I look forward to the conversation we are about to have.