

**OPENING STATEMENT OF
FCC CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN
PUBLIC HEARING ON MEDIA OWNERSHIP
TAMPA, FLORIDA
APRIL 30, 2007**

Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us today.

As you know, the Commission began a comprehensive review of our rules governing media ownership last summer. This hearing is the fourth in a series of six media ownership hearings the Commission intends to hold across the country. We held the first of these hearings in Los Angeles last October, the second hearing in Nashville last December, and the third hearing in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in February. The goal of these hearings is to more fully and directly involve the American people in the process. As I have said many times before, public input is critical to our process.

The decisions we will make about our ownership rules will be as difficult as they are critical. The media touches almost every aspect of our lives. We are dependent upon it for our news, our information and our entertainment. Indeed, the opportunity to express diverse viewpoints lies at the heart of our democracy.

The Commission has three core goals that our rules are intended to further: competition, diversity and localism. I recognize many of the concerns expressed about increased consolidation and preservation of diversity. Also critical to our review is exploring and understanding the competitive realities of the media marketplace. Some of our rules have not been updated for years and may no longer reflect the current marketplace. Indeed, the Third Circuit recognized this fact when it upheld the Commission's elimination of the newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership ban. It is our task then to respond to the court by ensuring that our ownership rules take into account the competitive environment in which media companies operate and promote localism and diversity.

In our review of ownership rules we are working to develop a record, with hearings like this one today and through the written comment process, on which to inform all of our decisions.

I am pleased that we are holding our fourth hearing here in Tampa. Tampa is the 12th largest media market in the United States with 14 television stations, 5 Class A television stations, 2 television translator stations, a 24 hour news station, over 60 FM and AM radio stations. Tampa also has five daily newspapers and over ten weekly newspapers, one of which, "La Gaceta," is the nation's only trilingual newspaper, written in English, Spanish and Italian.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts and insights on the subject of our media ownership rules. Thank you for your participation today.