

**TAMPA MEDIA OWNERSHIP FIELD HEARING
STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL**

Thank you for hosting us here in Tampa-St. Pete, the 12th largest media market in the country, as we continue our series of field hearings in our media ownership proceeding. In our three prior hearings, in Los Angeles, Nashville and Harrisburg, we have heard the perspectives of musicians, broadcasters, reporters, actors, writers, professors and hundreds of citizens. I look forward to hearing from you this evening about how our ownership rules affect you as viewers, listeners, businesspeople and members of this community.

The debate over broadcast ownership is concerns the vitality of our democracy and the appropriate balance among competitive efficiencies, diversity of voices and local focus. I've learned quickly that this debate elicits the opinions and passions of people from all walks of life from all over our nation. We need the first-hand knowledge that only you can provide about the sources you rely upon for news, information and entertainment so that we can analyze today's media marketplace and determine if and how our rules should change.

To our panelists and audience members -- thank you for being here today and for participating in our hearing. We value your input.