

**PORTLAND LOCALISM FIELD HEARING
STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL**

Thank you for hosting us here in Portland, Maine, one of the largest media markets in New England, as we conduct our first localism field hearing as part of the Commission's media ownership proceeding. We are here to gather information from our distinguished panelists and from the audience on the service that broadcasters provide to this community. Promoting localism is a key goal of the Commission's media ownership rules, along with ensuring competition and diversity. Localism is not just a good idea, it's the law.

Eight television stations, owned by seven different companies, are licensed to Portland. Portland's 32 radio stations are owned by twelve different entities and offer varied formats, from classical to rock to news and sports talk. Portland is served by the Portland Press Herald and Maine Sunday Telegram, owned by the Blethen Maine Newspapers – as well as several weekly publications. Blethen owns three other newspapers, all of them in Maine: the Kennebec Journal, Morning Sentinel and Coastal Journal. It is an affiliate of the Seattle Times Company, a 110-year-old family business with five newspapers in Washington State. For the purposes of FCC rules, there is no cross ownership of media properties in Portland. Blethen does not own any broadcasting stations. The owners of TV stations in Portland do not own any radio stations.

I look forward to hearing from you this evening about how the ownership of these media properties affects you as viewers, listeners, readers, businesspeople, consumers and citizens. Are broadcasters providing this community with the local information and support it needs? Are broadcast stations still your primary source for local news and information? Is the Internet, with blogs and other alternative sources of content, really competing with traditional broadcasting for local coverage? Armed with this information – which only you can provide – we at the FCC 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 opinions.