

**Statement of Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate  
At Media Ownership Hearing  
Chicago, IL  
September 20, 2007**

Thank you all for being here tonight and thank you to the Rainbow PUSH Coalition for your hospitality in hosting this important event. Certainly one of my top priorities, as required by law, is to implement policies that are in the public interest. That is why these hearings all across America are so important. Tonight we'll hear about how real people in real places receive and utilize vital news and entertainment-- and even emergency information during times of crisis. During our first four public hearings, we learned a great deal about the issues facing local citizens, broadcasters, and media companies. Today, we want to hear from you, the citizens of Chicago and surrounding areas. Chicago is the third largest media market in America, and the home of major corporations, professional sports franchises, and great jazz music—something I appreciate, as a resident of Nashville, TN, Music City USA!

Chicago has always held a special place in my heart because I grew up listening to WLS. It was the only station I got at my grandparents' farm--besides the Grand Ole Opry.

Music and media were part of my life from an early age, and I believe that is even more true of young people today. It is important to take into consideration the views and habits of the younger generation, or, as I refer to them, the "I-Generation" that grew up with the Internet. It is the I-Generation that will truly be impacted by the decisions we make today. This morning I spoke to a group of students at Northwestern Law School. We'll hear from one of those students in just a few minutes. While I was there, I asked these students how they get their news.

While some of the students continue to rely on local radio and television, the most significant response might have been one that we didn't even ask about -- blogs. From student responses it was clear that blogs represent a growing sector of America's news information sources. Today, the Internet enables individuals of any age to be writers, editors and publishers of news.

Whether in small towns or major media markets, people today, especially the I-Generation, continue to have access to more news and information outlets than ever before not just here in the United States but globally.

Thank you to our esteemed panelists. We have broadcasters, economists, professors-- and many engaged citizens-- and I look forward to hearing from all of you who are taking time to share your thoughts on these important matters. I appreciate everyone who is attending tonight, and look forward to your comments.