

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

Thank you all for welcoming us to Chicago. Thank you to Reverend Jackson and his staff for hosting us at the Operation Push headquarters. I am pleased to be here to gather information from our distinguished panelists and from the audience on the service that broadcasters provide to this community and how ownership of broadcasting outlets affects that service.

I have a personal interest in the Chicago media market because my late mother, Martha Shea McDowell, was a pioneer for women in journalism in Chicago when she worked as a reporter for the late great *Chicago Daily News* in the early 1950's. That paper ultimately failed because it did not adapt to market changes. Nonetheless, I am proud of my mom's contribution to the Chicago media market and to the role of women in media.

Chicago, of course, is the home of the Tribune, co-owned with WGN radio and WGN-TV. The Commission is currently reviewing the sale of the Tribune properties to a group of investors led by Sam Zell. Chicago is home to a total of 16 television stations, owned by 14 different entities. 166 radio stations, controlled by 97 owners, are licensed to Chicago. Two major daily newspapers, and 23 dailies in all, serve the Chicago area.

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, and guided by our policy goals of competition, localism and diversity, we at the FCC will 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.