

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE

Re: Standardized and Enhanced Disclosure Requirements for Television Broadcast Licensee Public Interest Obligations

Broadcasters play a vital role in informing, educating, and alerting the public about developments at home and abroad. The importance of their relationship with the American public cannot be overestimated. In order to strengthen this relationship, and ensure that broadcasters are fulfilling their mission, today we adopt an Order that will make broadcasters' operations more transparent, and allow their local viewers to see the educational, instructional, and outreach efforts made by broadcasters every day.

In this online world in which we live, almost every business now posts important product and service information online. Government entities also make consumer information available on the Web, from the local DMV to the U.S. Congress. Producers of news and information should make relevant business details available to their customers as well.

In an effort to achieve this partnership, we first require that a broadcaster's public inspection file be available on the Internet, and accessible to the disabled. We further require that broadcasters adopt a standardized programming report form to replace the current "issues/programs" list.

This Order is not meant to burden broadcasters, but rather to help them inform their audiences about the valuable public interest they serve. By providing standardized data, accessible online, broadcasters make it easy for local residents to understand and appreciate the resources they provide to their communities. For example, broadcasters are required to make emergency information available to persons with disabilities. This Order will allow local residents to go to a station's website and see what that station has done to provide emergency information generally, and what efforts they have undertaken to make emergency information available specifically to persons with disabilities. We hope this will result in increased accountability and information-sharing between broadcasters and the public. It will also ease the Commission's efforts in determining whether a broadcaster is in compliance with Commission policies.

Broadcasters use the public airwaves to keep Americans connected, both in times of joy and in times of crisis. A more transparent operations process will allow the public to take advantage of all the services broadcasters have to offer.