

## STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE

### *Re: Annual Assessment of the Status of Competition in the Market for Delivery of Video Programming*

Since arriving at the FCC, I have been pleased to support policies that have facilitated commercial negotiations, provided incentives for investment, and encouraged competition; all of which hopefully results in real world benefits for consumers, whether through quality, choice, or new advances in technology.

The Annual Video Competition Report is one of the most important that this agency produces for Congress. It is the goal of this Commission to encourage competition, especially in the video marketplace. We have taken a number of steps to encourage new entrants, and consumers now have more options for video than ever before.

Our deregulatory decisions in the U.S. communications industry have resulted in significant investment--likely more than \$70 billion by the telecommunications industry in 2007 alone. We have seen unparalleled investment in new fiber deployment and new entrants offering video and broadband. Consumers are reaping the benefits with triple and even quadruple plays.

Competition can benefit consumers in terms of lower prices, a broader panoply of products, improved fidelity and quality, and even totally new tools to enhance the consumer experience. It also leads to investment, which advances both technology and innovation. With this in mind, the findings of the Annual Video Competition Report serve as a foundation for much of our policymaking. Therefore, the accuracy and transparency of the information is of paramount import.

Reasonable minds may differ in drawing conclusions from data. However, that data must be available for review and able to withstand scrutiny. Data should be complete and viable. That is why it is crucial that we set in motion a process for future competition reports as soon as possible, and that we ensure reliability and completeness prior to making an analysis of the underlying data, and then drawing a final conclusion.

This year's Report focuses heavily on the findings of one source, rather than the numerous sources our reports have included in the past. I believe we must consider a broader universe of information sources when we are considering so broad a change in policy. One option would be to supplement our analysis by requesting that Form 325 Survey information be provided by all cable operators. Just as our sister agency, the Securities and Exchange Commission, relies upon information it receives from cable companies, we should also be able to rely on the trustworthiness of the industry's own information. Finally, there should be no reason that this Commission cannot aptly analyze all relevant data, from all appropriate sources, as we do for other competition reports.

I am now able to approve this item concluding that the 70/70 test has not been met for the 2006 Report. However, I do not agree that we should postpone its delivery to Congress or to the public. I believe the information contained in the current draft supports the Report's conclusion that this data does not demonstrate with certainty that the second prong of the 70/70 test has been met. Therefore, I would like to see us move expeditiously to send this already-delayed Report to Congress now.

I look forward to working with the Chairman and my colleagues to resolve the questions that have been raised regarding the underlying data in this Report in order to provide our 2007 Report in a more timely, thorough manner. We cannot debate philosophy and substance until we all have access to full and complete information upon which to base our respective positions. And I hope that we can work together to finalize our 2007 Report to Congress expeditiously.