

**CONCURRING STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: *News Corp. and the DirecTV Group, Inc., Transferors, and Liberty Media Corporation, Transferee, for Authority to Transfer Control, MB Docket No. 07-18*

Four years ago, I strenuously dissented to the Commission's decision to allow News Corp. to acquire DirectTV. At the time, I said that the consolidation of so many media properties under News Corp.'s control could not be good for localism, diversity and competition. Nothing in the past four years has alleviated my concerns. To the contrary, the intervening years only confirm the devastating effect of media consolidation on the health of our democracy and the public interest.

Nevertheless, while I have objected to many of the Commission's decisions that have brought us to this point, I must make decisions based on the facts as they exist today. The question here is whether we should approve the transfer of assets from one giant media conglomerate to a marginally-less-giant media conglomerate. Once consummated, the transaction will result in a measure of de-consolidation and somewhat less vertical integration. That is the distinction between this transaction and the Hughes-News Corp. deal four years ago, and that is why I am concurring rather than dissenting in today's decision.

I support the Order's imposition of the *News Corp–Hughes* conditions and the requirement that the Applicant to abide by these conditions for a fresh six year period. I also support the Order's requirement that DirecTV-Puerto Rico and Liberty Cablevision of Puerto Rico sever any attributable relationships within a one-year period. This should ensure that consumers in Puerto Rico will not be faced with fewer choices in video providers after the condition is met.

I am disappointed that the Commission failed to adopt a condition requiring DirectTV to provide local-into-local service via satellite to all of the nation's 210 television markets within a reasonable period of time. Such a condition would have served the public interest by ensuring that consumers in rural states from North Dakota to Michigan to Maine have access to the news and public safety information provided by local broadcast stations—without the upfront investment contemplated by the Applicant's over-the-air solution for these markets.

In the end, this transaction is hardly an occasion to jump for joy. The Commission should be waging a proactive battle against harmful media consolidation, not simply accepting small levels of de-consolidation when it comes. Over the past twenty-five years, the Commission has permitted the public interest largely to be defined by the demands of Wall Street and Madison Avenue. It's high time to restore a sense of balance to the system and give the American people the media environment they deserve.