

**PUBLIC *EN BANC* HEARING AT CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY ON
BROADBAND AND THE DIGITAL FUTURE**

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL

Thank you all for welcoming us to Pittsburgh. Thank you Congressman Doyle not only for your presence here today but for your leadership on issues at the heart of the FCC's mission. I am pleased to be here to gather information from our distinguished panelists, and from the audience, on broadband services and our country's digital future.

With its abundance of choices, we are living in a consumer-driven market. Consumers demand meaningful options for pulling the content of their choice anytime, anywhere and on any device. For instance, ComScore reports that Americans are pulling over 11 billion video downloads per month indicating a powerful and market driven à la carte environment. Those who seek to frustrate today's empowered consumers do so at their own peril. At the same time, the current market requires that broadband network and service providers have an economic incentive to deploy new technologies. In order to raise the capital necessary to build more robust networks, operators, and potential new entrants, must be able to pay back their investors. That's the only way new networks will be built, and existing networks will be upgraded and expanded.

We at the FCC should be fully attuned to market developments that have the potential to frustrate consumer demand. Consumers, network owners, content providers and many others, all have differing and important points of view of whether, and to what extent, the Internet should be regulated. Discussions regarding the future of network management continue to be vigorous and healthy. In fact, for many years, independent Internet governance groups comprised of engineers, academics, software developers,

Internet infrastructure builders and others, have worked together to discuss and resolve quickly technical challenges as they arise. This intense focus has heightened awareness of the importance of a robust, healthy Internet to the future of the American - and global - economies. Perhaps not surprisingly, given all of the attention and collaboration, the Internet has flourished because it has operated under the principle that engineers should solve engineering problems, not politicians and bureaucrats.

But sometimes shining sunlight on these matters can produce amazingly beneficial effects. This forum gives us an additional opportunity to explore new market conditions, network developments and potential challenges. What we do, or don't do, will affect today's build out of tomorrow's networks.

I am pleased to be here. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and engaging them in an active dialogue. To our panelists and audience members -- thank you for being here today and for participating in our hearing. We do value your opinions.