

**STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE  
DECEMBER 30, 2008**

First, I would like to thank President Bush for the honor and privilege of serving as Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission; and more importantly, the opportunity to serve the people of this nation during this transformational and revolutionary time -- a time in the history of US communications that heralded courageous investment decisions, tenacious entrepreneurship and unrivaled American innovation.

I could not have served with 4 more dedicated, professional and compassionate individuals. They epitomize all that is good and positive about the term "public servant." To Chairman Martin, Commissioner Copps, Commissioner Adelstein and Commissioner McDowell: I thank each of you for so many gifts to me professionally and personally. Gifts of your time, your wisdom, your insights and especially our ability to disagree on principle without being disagreeable. I hope you will continue to seek and find consensus whenever possible, keeping the public interest rather than the "politics du jour" at the forefront of every decision. I am proud of the hundreds of consensus decisions we have forged and the number of truly historic items adopted over the past three (3) years, which will impact and improve the health, productivity, safety and, yes, even entertainment opportunities for America and the world. Thank

each of you for your service, your own commitment and now your friendship that will survive any term limits.

Today, the recession runs deep and wide across our nation. Thus, it is important that the FCC going forward not make decisions in a vacuum. The ICT sectors can assist with the jumpstarting and hopefully the re-stabilization of the overall economy -- insuring continued investment to produce new and better-paying jobs. In addition, ICT can play an integral role in our energy independence and the “greening” of the environment. I hope to become reinvolved in the energy dialogue and especially in forging cooperative partnerships not merely cross-platform but across entire sectors. That is why it is important to continue a market-driven, deregulatory pathway toward more innovation and continued investment, when our nation needs it most.

I thank those of you who represent the industry before the Commission; those who are officers of the court, advocates and employees; Associations representing members and sectors who are investing and building and developing the infrastructure, software, and even new technologies yet unseen for this Information and Digital Age; as well as many Nonprofits and consumer oriented groups with whom I have worked closely. I especially thank those of you who reached across the table -- and the aisle -- to work toward creative, voluntary, pro-consumer market-place solutions. As we move away from economic regulation, it is imperative the Commission and companies alike serve as honest brokers of truthful and neutral information so that consumers can take full advantage of the benefits of competition through well-informed choices. Certainly,

the FCC must enforce its rules and regulations promptly and fairly; perhaps utilizing more creative sanctions than mere dollar fines -- solutions that curb bad behavior and more specifically address consumer harm. To that end, the Commission should embrace and collaborate more closely with our sister federal agencies as well as the state commissions regarding consumer protection. I will continue to speak out regarding principles of federalism as well as streamlining and making government work more collaboratively and efficiently at all levels.

I would like to especially recognize my state colleagues who have served on the important and extremely useful Federal State Joint Boards. Thank you to Chairman Martin for his confidence in appointing me to Chair three (3) of these timely and reenergized Joint Boards. The USF Joint Board worked diligently for more than two (2) years and I had hoped the Commission would have acted on your sound recommendations to launch fundamental reform of the universal service system. You should be commended for your dedication to this issue, and I personally appreciated all you did to bring the industry, Members of Congress and this Commission closer together and the progress we achieved. This will need your continued commitment. I hope you will encourage the FCC to begin anew the process toward reform, even if by taking the first step toward reform in the New Year. Thank you for your support of it and me has been an honor to serve with each of you.

I prefer to see any perceived failures we may have experienced as a Commission as fresh opportunities; opportunities for further study and contemplation of new

information; to take the necessary time to consider the maximum amount of input -- including constructive criticism -- in order to reach an evidence-based and well-reasoned decision in the end. To that end, I wish my colleagues Godspeed in the crucial decisions for the “D” block and our commitment to a nationwide, interoperable public safety network. I tried to bring forward novel concepts, especially from those who serve at the ground level everyday so that our decision would provide our valiant public safety and first responders the tools they need to protect our homeland and our homes.

I appreciated and have been impressed with the interest, knowledge and alacrity of the FCC Transition Team and wish them well as they and the new FCC move forward on issues of critical import from the “D” block to continued emphasis on broadband deployment to the upcoming DTV transition. I pledge any help I can provide.

Let me also take a moment to recognize the state broadcasters who have been incredible partners as we journeyed across the U.S. to educate citizens regarding the digital television transition. Thank you for all you have done to prepare your facilities, for producing and airing millions of PSAs and organizing our personal FCC media tours. I would also like to thank all our federal and state agency partners as well as nonprofits at the local, state and national level. I especially want to recognize NTIA and the incredible efforts to implement the coupon program under Acting Assistant Secretary Baker’s leadership especially during these present difficult economic times.

Thank you to the cable and satellite TV industries as well as non-broadcast sectors that have provided information to their consumers and hands-on assistance. The FCC will need your continued assistance even after February 17 to insure our citizens remain connected; especially those most at risk who are dependent on OTA broadcasts for information, news and emergency alerts.

The Commission will also rely upon the members of the FCC press corps for assistance with DTV and many other crucial public policy issues ahead. I applaud you for your quick study, tenacity and your ability to deduce highly technical and complex issues to a few paragraphs of informative and useful (sometimes even insightful for us) pages of text. I will look forward to reading your reporting as Citizen Tate rather than Commissioner Tate.

When I first arrived, I hoped that the Commission would spend time outside the Beltway and we did. I applaud the Chairman for holding a record number of hearings across the country on topics ranging from media ownership and localism -- where we heard from literally thousands of citizens across the entire country-- to complex technical hearings regarding reasonable network management practices. I was especially pleased to Chair the 706 Joint Board and the recent FCC Broadband Summit in Silicon Valley which focused on public-private broadband projects including the FCC's rural healthcare pilot projects and "Connected Tennessee" successfully deploying broadband to many rural areas in my home state. I was especially pleased and thank Chairman Martin specifically for holding two (2) national hearings in

Nashville, the most recent regarding the interplay of media and childhood obesity -- an issue I have been extremely committed to. In addition to superb, national researchers from Vanderbilt Medical Center, several media companies including Disney and Sesame Street presented positive and historic steps being taken to reduce the unhealthy food advertising to children. Through our Task Force on Childhood Obesity, several media companies have agreed to an historic ban regarding the use of licensed characters for promoting unhealthy foods to our children. I also thank the food and beverage companies who continue to make pledges through the voluntary CBBB program and encourage all media companies, advertising entities and food and beverage companies to be part of the solution. It is not just the right thing to do; it is also good for the bottom line. Most importantly, ten million children are depending on us.

I am thrilled that the new Administration will continue our strong emphasis on the expansion of broadband to all Americans and to all parts of this nation. I am proud of this Commission and all our accomplishments: from a number of extremely successful spectrum auctions to launch innovative wireless broadband offerings to video franchising reform to rural healthcare broadband pilots to more regulatory symmetry in order to encourage and enable additional and widespread deployment. But there is much more to be done. And, as more American families do go online, it is equally important that we not only recognize the incredible opportunities that access to

the internet brings -- education, ehealth, e-commerce -- but also the very real and present dangers to our children.

That is why I was particularly pleased to have been invited to participate in the High-Level Session of the International Telecommunications Union's Forum on Internet Safety. The desire to keep our children safe is universal; it provides a basis to forge ongoing working relationships with our international colleagues. As we become an increasingly connected and global world community, we must keep our relationships strong and open. To that end, I was also very honored to have participated in a number of other high level meetings such as the 2008 World Radio Conference, APEC-TEL, bilateral meetings with both Anatel and the Ministry in Brazil and recently with at the West Africa Roadmap to Opportunities Conference in Ghana. Even developing countries share our desire to deploy broadband to their most remote citizens. These are important and strategic relationships from Chairman Shehadi in Lebanon to Minister Costa in Brazil to ITU Secretary General Hamadoun Toure. We can learn much from other nations, and I encourage my colleagues to become more involved in these and future global initiatives. I can assure you that the expert FCC international team will continue to provide the same stellar level of professional consultation and technical expertise regarding the mechanics of spectrum auctions. I hope you will build upon the video-teleconferencing opportunities that we have undertaken with our colleagues on topics of interest from DTV to highly technical engineering issues. Our staff is indeed revered worldwide as the "gold standard." I

thank them for their support of me personally on each of these journeys and wish them continued strong relationships and successful negotiations.

In addition, I want to specifically thank all of the dedicated career Commission staff. Thank you especially to those who have been my law professors, physics teachers, economists, editors, sector and industry experts; those who defend our decisions in court; those who greet us each day and protect us 24/7; thank you to those who transport us safely, and those who provide support seen and unseen. Thank you for your kindnesses to me, known and unknown. To those of you I have had the pleasure of working with for many years and to those I never had the opportunity to meet: thank you for your outstanding and dedicated service to the FCC, to our country and to our citizens.

And, to my personal staff: from those who assisted me through the confirmation process to those who recently helped inventory the Tate Suite, and all those in between, including our large group of energetic legal interns, I value your loyalty (often burning the midnight oil), your commitment to my personal “open door policy” so that we could hear all sides of an issue; your own work toward consensus (even when that meant a lot more work for you). Special thanks to those who traveled at breakneck speed with me on numerous trips, accompanied me on seemingly never-ending tours of convention halls, driving in foreign cities and flying in tiny prop planes and those who created and made the schedules run smoothly and effectively. Thank each and every one of you for your enthusiasm to tackle any subject, your quick study of complex



issues, your exceptional research and speech writing abilities, and your prompt response to my constant emails and unquenchable curiosity. Thank you for your strong ethical character, professional integrity and your positive demeanor -- even in the midst of stressful situations.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to my family: to my husband and life-long partner who has supported me throughout this incredible journey and my children who I pledge will have a more present mother in their lives. And to all my extended family and close friends in Tennessee, around the country and the world, thank you for always reminding me what is truly important in Life.

While serving at the FCC, I have tried to be a voice for children and families. I have tried to bring old-fashioned common sense and to represent the interests of Main Street, small businesses and rural America; to speak out for our songwriters and storytellers and inventors; and to try and insure our decisions keep in mind those who are most in need. As Abraham Lincoln said: *"I have just tried to do my very best each and every day."* I have tried to also act justly, show mercy and walk humbly with God.

Wishing all of you and your families a safe holiday season and all good tidings for a happy, healthy and wondrous 2009! May God richly bless each of you.