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For Immediate Release

SIMINGTON SPEAKS WITH OHIO ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 7, 2021—Today, Commissioner Nathan Simington at the Federal Communications Commission spoke with the Ohio Association of Broadcasters. Commissioner Simington noted,

“[W]e predicate [regulation of broadcasters] on the physical properties of radio waves themselves. You know, the involuntary penetration of emissions into the American home. That was the fundamental basis for our exercise of jurisdiction. But at the time the Communications Act was written—or even since its major revision in the 1990s—could we have imagined the practical penetration of online content; of, indeed, online culture, into our homes and lives?

I don't think we could have. The Communications Act was most recently revised back when American Online was still sending out CDs in the mail and a 28.8 kilobaud modem was a state of the art connection. It was in 1996, for instance, that the first ‘internet fax machine,’ such as it was, was used. And it was two years after that when Paul Krugman, the Nobel-winning economist, predicted that, by 2005, the internet's impact on the economy would have proven no greater than that fax machine. So much for prognostication.

We cannot see the future. But we can certainly see the recent past. And if the future is anything like it, video consumption on online platforms will continue to climb, with more and more advertiser and subscription dollars flowing to them, while broadcasters will continue to be squeezed when it comes to advertising revenue.

We have to take account of this reality and reckon with it.”

The full text of Commissioner Simington’s remarks may be found at:
<https://www.fcc.gov/about/leadership/nathan-simington#speeches>

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