

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN MICHAEL K. POWELL**

Re: Review of the Emergency Alert System, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

For over a half century, the United States has had in place a national warning system utilizing, in part, our Nation's broadcast outlets. From the CONELRAD, established in 1951 by President Truman during the Korean War to its replacement, the Emergency Broadcast System, established in 1963 by President Kennedy to the modern day Emergency Alert System (EAS), our government has sought to employ our country's media outlets as a mechanism for warning the American public of an emergency.

A lot has changed since 1951. As the primary role of EAS remains a national public warning system, increasingly state and local jurisdictions have used its capabilities to notify their citizens of local emergencies, including natural weather disasters and in saving the lives of many abducted children through the Amber Alert. In addition, EAS has grown from its predecessor's birth on AM radio to FM radio, broadcast television and wireline and wireless cable systems. Of course, the threats to our homeland have also changed dramatically over the last fifty years. As the world around us has changed, however, the import of the EAS as a tool for reaching our citizenry during time of need remains high.

We are proud to adopt this Notice today, as a result, in part, of the recommendations of the Media Security and Reliability Council and the Partnership for Public Warning and in coordination with our partners at the Department of Homeland Security and its component, FEMA and the Department of Commerce and its component, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service.

This proceeding will provide one of many vehicles by which we collectively explore the most effective mechanism for warning the American public of an emergency and the role of EAS as we move further into our digital future. I commend my colleagues here at the Commission and our partners at DHS, FEMA, DoC and NOAA for their dedication to making our homeland a safer place for our citizens.