

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER DEBORAH TAYLOR TATE**

*Re: Children's Television Obligations of Digital Television Broadcasters, Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (MM Docket 00-167)*

Children are one of this country's most valuable assets. It is imperative that we make every effort to nurture and protect them as they develop. Media – and, in particular, television – plays a pervasive role in the lives of Americans today. Nielsen Media Research reports that during the 2004-2005 television seasons, the average household watched television for 8 hours, 11 minutes each day.<sup>1</sup> And according to a Kaiser Family Foundation Study, 81 percent of children between the ages of 8 and 18 watch television in a typical day, and 8 to 18 year-olds watch TV on average for 3 hours and 4 minutes a day.<sup>2</sup> The American Psychological Association has found that “children under the age of eight lack the cognitive development to understand the persuasive intent of television advertising and are uniquely susceptible to advertising's influence.”<sup>3</sup> That is why it is critical that our rules successfully ensure that broadcast television licensees provide educational programming for children and that video programming directed at children is free of excessive and inappropriate commercial messages.

Throughout my career I have advocated private dispute resolution over government intervention. Therefore, I was delighted to discover that one of my very first meetings as an FCC Commissioner would be with ALL of the parties involved in the negotiations – public interest groups advocating on behalf of children as well as broadcasters, cable networks, and those who develop content for children's programming – together in one room. Those individuals worked successfully with each other on a voluntary basis to resolve their respective concerns and develop the *Joint Proposal of Industry and Advocates on Reconsideration of Children's Television Rules* that we have before us today. I look forward to reviewing comments filed in response to the *Joint Proposal* and working with my fellow Commissioners to ensure that our rules strike the appropriate balance.

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<sup>1</sup> Nielsen Media Research, *Nielsen Reports Americans Watch TV at Record Levels* (press release), Sept. 29, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> *Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-olds*, A Kaiser Family Foundation Study, March 2005, at 7.

<sup>3</sup> See Press Release, *Television Advertising Leads to Unhealthy Habits in Children; says APA Task Force*, February 23, 2004, available at <http://www.apa.org/releases/childrenads.html>.