

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL**

Re: Third Periodic Review of the Commission's Rules and Policies Affecting the Conversion to Digital Television (MB Docket No. 07-91)

This Notice provides a progress report on the digital transition, proposes deadlines and procedures to ensure that the February 17, 2009 transition date is met and offers regulatory flexibility to broadcasters to facilitate their construction of digital facilities by the deadline. Since Congress established the transition deadline, the Commission has moved beyond simply ensuring that stations were capable of operating in digital to focus on facilitating broadcasters' construction of their final, post-transition channel facilities. In this Notice, we analyze and consider the specifics on when stations may and must cease analog operations, when they may and must begin operating on their post-transition digital channel and what regulatory flexibility we can provide to ensure that the complicated, coordinated switch to DTV becomes a reality.

I thank Media Bureau for their diligent and tireless efforts to produce this comprehensive notice. Much more work remains to be done, but we are all striving to make the transition as smooth as possible for the industry and for consumers so that the benefits of digital television technology can be enjoyed by the public without TV sets going dark. I thank the Chairman for his leadership on these issues and support this Notice.