STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL

Re: *Petition for Declaratory Ruling to Clarify 47 U.S.C. § 572 in the Context of Transactions*
        Between Competitive Local Exchange Carriers and Cable Operators; Conditional
        Petition for Forbearance from Section 652 of the Communications Act for Transactions
        Between Competitive Local Exchange Carriers and Cable Operators, WC Docket No. 11-
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Today, the Commission forbears from Section 652(b) of the 1996 Act, thereby allowing a cable operator or its affiliate to acquire a competitive local exchange carrier that provides telephone exchange service within the cable operator's franchise area.

I am pleased that not only does the petition meet all of the legal criteria for forbearance relief, but also granting it is the right public policy outcome. Consumers will benefit from the increased efficiencies springing from strategic combinations between cable companies and competitive local telecom companies.

This is a positive and constructive order in several respects. First, as noted earlier, the requisite forbearance criteria have squarely been satisfied.[1] Second, this forbearance order promotes good public policy because it should spur competition in the telecommunications marketplace. And third, this action is consistent with my continued call for FCC policies that promote consumer choice offered through competition and abundance rather than through regulation and its unintended consequences.

In the spirit of today's deregulatory action, the FCC should be even more energetic in finding additional regulatory underbrush to clear out of the way of competitive markets. For instance, the Commission should undertake more forbearance actions on its own accord rather than waiting for outside parties to file costly petitions. Not only would such initiative be a matter of good government, it is encouraged by the Act.

I thank the Chairman and my colleagues for their support of this order. And I look forward to working with them on similar endeavors in the future.

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[1] 47 U.S.C. 160(a).