

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. McDOWELL**

Re: *Rural Health Care Support Mechanism*, WC Docket No. 02-60

I support the Commission's extension of the rural health care pilot program's funding for limited purposes, for a time certain, and for up to a specific amount. In so doing, I underscore my long-standing interest in the FCC completing *comprehensive* reform of all components of the universal service fund, including the rural health care program. I look forward to completing this reform in a fiscally responsible way and doing so in a manner that embodies Congress's recognition that the creation of the rural health care program could help rural Americans have access to advanced health care as do urban Americans.