

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN KEVIN J. MARTIN**

Re: Digital Audio Broadcasting Systems and Their Impact on the Terrestrial Radio Broadcast Service (MM Docket No. 99-325)

Today's action by the Commission will promote radio's transition from the analog world to the digital one. Much like it does in television, this transition presents radio stations the opportunity to multicast. Multicasting will enable radio stations to provide a greater amount and greater variety of free programming to consumers.

This order also confirms that digital radio stations are subject to the same public interest obligations as analog radio stations. Every obligation broadcasters have in the analog world must continue in the digital world. These include requirements that broadcasters air programming about the significant issues facing their local communities, provide emergency alerts and make emergency information accessible to those with disabilities, and follow extensive requirements governing political advertising.

The Commission made a similar determination to carry over obligations from analog to digital in the television context as well. We increased the obligations for children's programming in the digital world. The Commission is currently considering a proposal that would modify broadcasters' disclosure obligations to improve the availability and quality of information available to the public. I support this "enhanced disclosure"—the requiring of broadcasters to tell us and the public exactly how much time they devote to, for example, local programming, news and current affairs, political campaigns, or even local sports. I am not comfortable, however, telling broadcasters exactly how much time they must spend on each of these areas. In addition, I believe mandatory minimums too often become ceilings on what broadcasters provide, not floors.

Today, the Commission also adopts a Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that seeks comment on whether we should adopt any new public interest requirements for digital audio broadcasters. While radio broadcasters are not subject to children's programming requirements, they too must maintain public files and information about their efforts to serve the public. I support modifying their disclosure obligations too to ensure that the public has more and better information about these efforts. I am pleased that the Notice seeks comment on this specific issue of enhanced disclosure.