

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL**

*Re: Review of the Emergency Alert System; Independent Spanish Broadcasters Association, the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, Inc., and the Minority Media and Telecommunications Council, Petition for Immediate Relief, EB Docket No. 04-296.*

In this Order, we take steps to increase the reliability, security and efficacy of the nation's Emergency Alert System (EAS) network to enable federal and state authorities to rapidly communicate with the public in times of crisis. Specifically, we: require EAS participants to accept messages using Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) when CAP is approved by FEMA; require common carriers providing video service to participate in EAS as broadcasters and cable and satellite providers already do; and permit the transmission of state-level EAS alerts that are originated by governors or their designees. This Order establishes a framework for the next generation of EAS, which through innovative technologies will provide a redundant, more resilient system for delivering emergency alerts. The upgraded EAS that CAP will enable also will ensure better outreach to all Americans, including non-English speakers and persons with hearing and vision disabilities.

As recent history has shown us, rapid response and warning systems are vital to the safety and security of the public in emergencies, whether the threat is an act of God or man-made. Americans tune in to their radios and televisions for the information they need in such critical times. Our actions today harness the capabilities offered by new technologies to improve the EAS system for the benefit of the public, particularly those who have been harder to reach.

I thank the Bureau for their hard work and I support this Order.