

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER ROBERT M. MCDOWELL

Re: In the Matter of Implementation of Section 3 of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992; Statistical Report on Average Rates for Basic Service, Cable Programming Service, and Equipment, Report on Cable Industry Prices, MM Docket 92-266

This Cable Price Survey presents statistical information about the average rates for cable basic and expanded basic tiers of service in markets with varying levels of competition. Compiling this information, while potentially helpful, is only a first step. While the McDowell family's cable bill has gone up a lot in recent years, I would like for us to study the status of video competition in terms of not only prices, but also value provided to consumers, programming costs, barriers to entry and so forth. What the Cable Price Survey does not provide is an analysis of all of the potential factors that could cause overall rate increases. For instance, are higher rates reflective of many factors including: consumers buying more bundled service offerings; greater value being offered today compared with several years ago (such as the benefits of digital cable over analog, or more channel offerings); cost recovery due to regulatory burdens; or other causes? Such analyses will better inform our actions with respect to furthering competition in the video marketplace. In the meantime, I look forward to continuing to use this report as a resource. Many thanks to the Media Bureau for their work on this report.