

**Separate Statement of
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein**

Re: Second Periodic Review of the Commission's Rules and Policies Affecting the Conversion to Digital, MB Docket No. 03-15; RM9832; MM Docket Nos. 99-360,00-167, 00-168.

I fully support the Commission's efforts to review the progress of the digital transition. In facilitating that transition, the Commission's primary concern must be to protect the interests of the American consumer. Above all, we must ensure that the public continues to have access to free, over-the-air broadcasting in the digital world, so that broadcasting will remain the vital source of news, information, and programming for all Americans that it is today.

The digital age promises consumers a host of innovative services, from high definition programming with compact disc quality sound to ancillary data services. I support an aggressive but realistic deployment schedule to hasten the arrival of that digital promise. The Commission must do all it can to accelerate the availability of digital broadcast signals, stimulate demand for new digital equipment and programming, and permit the recovery of valuable spectrum currently allocated to broadcast service.

The Commission has a particularly significant role to play in defining broadcasters' public interest obligations in a digital world. Congress has made clear that the public interest obligations that originated in the analog era will carry over to the digital era, but we have yet to resolve precisely how those obligations will apply. I am pleased that the Commission has raised the public interest issues as part of its periodic review process, thereby reflecting the importance of these issues to a successful digital transition. I encourage parties to accept our invitation to refresh the records in the pending public interest proceedings and look forward to their prompt resolution.

Ultimately, a successful digital transition depends upon everyone working together to serve consumers. This will not be easy, as the history of this transition has often demonstrated. But I am encouraged by the constructive spirit I have seen on all sides since I joined the Commission. I look forward to working with industry, consumer groups, and others as we continue to chart a transition that is as rapid and smooth as possible for the American public.