



NEWS

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FCC CHAIRMAN MICHAEL POWELL ANNOUNCES PUBLIC HEARING IN RICHMOND, VA. ON MEDIA OWNERSHIP

FCC Chairman Michael Powell announced today that the Commission will hold a public hearing on media ownership issues in Richmond, Virginia, in February, 2003.

Powell said the hearing will provide another opportunity to solicit public opinion about media ownership issues in a mid-sized market and will supplement the media hearing the Commission held in October 2001 and the extensive record that has already been accumulated.

Chairman Powell stated "I agree that a local public hearing can provide value to our proceedings. Severe budget constraints and a commitment not to further delay completion of this critical proceeding are also paramount considerations in conducting such a hearing and the choice of venue. Conducting a hearing in Richmond appropriately balances those concerns."

"He said, "The Commission will continue to look for opportunities to ensure that we are soliciting input from the public both generally, and in association with the empirical studies which I believe provide the most important foundation for our decision in a manner that the courts will sustain," stated Chairman Powell. The Commission released 12 studies in early October and is currently soliciting comments on those studies. In addition, the authors of those studies continue to be available to the public to answer questions about the studies."

Powell said, "The Commission is committed to developing a set of media ownership rules that are internally consistent, tailored to the modern media marketplace and empirically justified. The public interest, and the courts, demand nothing less."

Details on the public hearing will be released at a later date.