

**STATEMENT BY TIMOTHY J. MURIS  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
MAY 16, 2001**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is a great honor to have been nominated by the President to serve as Chair of the Federal Trade Commission. I thank you for the opportunity to appear before this Committee, and I appreciate the expeditious scheduling of this hearing.

As members of the Committee already know, I have held three staff positions at the Federal Trade Commission: as an assistant to the Director of the Planning Office (1974-1976), as Director of the Bureau of Consumer Protection (1981-1983), and as Director of the Bureau of Competition (1983-1985).

I am fully committed to the mission of the Federal Trade Commission. There has been a beneficial evolution in policy for enforcing the consumer protection and antitrust laws within the Commission's jurisdiction. If confirmed, I desire to continue this trend.

Regarding consumer protection, twenty years ago we shifted the Federal Trade Commission's emphasis away from cumbersome rulemaking designed to transform entire industries toward aggressive law enforcement of the basic rules that we already have – rules against fraud, deception, and breach of contract. Our vision was that the Federal Trade Commission would forge a bipartisan consensus on how to protect consumers and would work with other federal and state agencies to provide maximum benefits for consumers from the Federal Trade Commission's limited resources. Today, through the hard work of hundreds of people over the past 20 years and superb leadership at the Commission – most recently by Bob Pitfosky and Jodie Bernstein – that dream has become reality.

Regarding antitrust, bipartisan consensus also exists. Although there is disagreement about cases at the margin, there is widespread agreement that the purpose of antitrust is to protect consumers, that economic analysis should guide case selection, and that horizontal cases, both mergers and agreements among

competitors, are the mainstays of antitrust. Moreover, today there is bipartisan recognition that antitrust is a way of organizing our economy. A freely functioning market, subject to the rules of antitrust, provides maximum benefit to consumers.

Finally, a program that Chairman Pitofsky reinstated at the Federal Trade Commission should be continued. That program studies various aspects of the economy and issues reports to Congress and to the public. Through public hearings and use of the FTC's investigative powers, the agency has increased public knowledge of important issues.

I would be glad to respond to your questions.