

STATEMENT
OF
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE

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Thank you, Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and distinguished Members of the Committee for the great privilege of appearing before you today as a nominee for Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I applaud your call for an FCC that serves all Americans and share your passion for and commitment to meaningful reform. The FCC should never lose sight of the public interest it was created to protect. Your leadership on this score has been extraordinary.

Senator Hutchison, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you to develop a communications policy that reflects a keen awareness of the impact of the Commission's decisions on both consumers and industry stakeholders.

I would like to thank Senator Graham for introducing me today. Senator Graham has a long and distinguished record of public service, and I am humbled by his kind words in support of my nomination. I also would like to acknowledge my other Senator, Mr. DeMint, another distinguished public servant with whom I look forward to working on communications issues, if confirmed.

I am deeply honored by President Obama's nomination of me to serve as a member of the Commission. If confirmed, I pledge to work with each member of this Committee to ensure that the FCC is fair, open and transparent, and that it protects consumers, encourages robust competition in the marketplace and champions technological innovation.

My record reflects an understanding of the kinds of challenges faced by everyday Americans. I began my professional career by serving for 14 years as publisher, general manager and lead editor of *The Coastal Times*, a weekly newspaper serving Greater Charleston. The paper – a business I helped build from the ground up – offered a voice to those individuals and families whose stories were rarely covered by the mainstream press, and reported on issues and events with direct relevance to their daily lives.

That experience has served as a guide in my current role as a member – and former chair – of the South Carolina Public Service Commission. During my 11 years at the Commission, I have never lost sight of the fact that at the other end of every Commission decision are consumers and businesses that are left to contend with the consequences of our actions. A successful regulatory agency must weigh these implications in order to best understand where and in what circumstances regulation makes good sense.

I am also a strong believer in the value of collaboration within and among levels of the government. As the current Chair of the Washington Action Committee for the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, I have witnessed first-hand the benefits of and necessity for cooperation among local, state and federal governmental agencies. These partnerships are essential to achieving a uniform and predictable regulatory environment in which technological innovation can thrive.

I appear before you well aware of the formidable economic challenges our nation faces today. I firmly believe, however, that we have at our disposal a communications sector that, if harnessed, should be a leader in our nation's economic recovery and long-term sustainable economic growth. Our success will depend in large measure upon our ability to think creatively, spur innovation and work together to use communication technologies in a way that enables businesses to succeed and improve the lives of Americans.

We also must ensure that all Americans have access to and can make productive use of the communications tools essential to making the American Dream a reality. Most notably, by providing universal, high-speed, high-quality affordable access to broadband we can establish the essential underpinnings for enduring national prosperity.

Before closing Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank my family and friends, many of whom are here today, for their constant love and support. My father, James, who

many of you know, has instilled in me the values of courage and compassion, and stressed their importance in the world of public service. My mother, Emily, a retired librarian, shared with me her love of learning and the power of knowledge. My siblings Jennifer, a public school teacher, and Angela, a wellness advocate, taught me the art of diplomacy and the value of respecting and appreciating all points of view.

It would be my sincere honor to utilize those qualities working with Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners Copps, McDowell and Baker, if confirmed, the outstanding FCC staff, and the distinguished members of this Committee to confront our nation's communications challenges. And if confirmed, I will not take lightly your trust.

Chairman Rockefeller and members of the Committee, again I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I am pleased to answer your questions.

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