

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JAMES H. QUELLO

In Re: Broadcast Comparative Hearings Policy Statement

I support the majority position in continuing our present policy in comparative renewal cases. My support is based less on philosophical grounds than upon practical ones. It is clear to me that, absent Congressional action, comparative renewal proceedings are a fact of life and no objective standards, regardless of how they might be framed, will serve to obviate such proceedings under current interpretations of the court.

I want to make it clear that I view this issue as a technical one, however, and I do not regard it as an implication that the Commission is satisfied with current levels of public service by all the broadcasting industry. My personal view is that public service standards could, and should, be higher and that more time and effort should be devoted to local programming--including public affairs and news programming during hours which attract the largest audiences. I also believe that more attention should be devoted to the production and scheduling of public service announcements in TV prime time or radio "drive" time to reach a large audience and ensure effectiveness. Establishment of rigid rules to force public service performance would probably be a misuse of governmental authority. However, such performance, or lack thereof, will receive considerable weight in my personal future deliberations in renewal cases.

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