

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN
CHAIRMAN, SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
NOMINATION OF MICHAEL POWELL TO BE FCC CHAIRMAN

MAY 17, 2001

Good morning. The Senate Commerce Committee is meeting today for confirmation hearings to examine the qualifications of Mr. Michael Powell, who has been nominated by the President to serve as the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission.

I would like to welcome Mr. Powell this morning, as well as his family and friends. And I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his exceptional and distinguished record. As Chairman and as a Commissioner of the FCC, and as an attorney in private practice, he has consistently demonstrated extraordinary talent and leadership abilities. A recent Washington Post article said it best when they wrote, "Michael Powell is well-liked and respected to a degree not often found in Washington, drawing praise from both sides of the partisan aisle." Such qualities are absolutely essential to an FCC Chairman who must lead the FCC into the digital age and the new economy.

Mr. Powell has already devoted much of his career to public service. In addition to being the current Chairman and a commissioner of the FCC, he has served as Chief of Staff of the Antitrust Division at the Department of Justice and had a distinguished military career as an officer in the United States Army. I appreciate his willingness to continue to serve this country, and I thank him for his steadfast commitment and dedication. I also thank his family, who I am sure have been instrumental in his success and in his being here with us this morning.

Today, we are here to review and seek comment from Mr. Powell on his qualifications to be Chairman of the FCC and to engage in a dialogue with the members of this Committee about what direction the FCC will take under his leadership if he is confirmed.

I would like to point out that the FCC is an independent agency created by the Congress. As such, its primary responsibility is to implement and enforce the will of Congress and thereby facilitate Congress' exercise of its responsibilities pursuant to the Commerce Clause. The Congress enacts the laws governing interstate commerce, including telecommunications. The FCC is an agency created by the Congress and delegated the responsibility to implement the telecommunications laws that Congress enacts.

Again, I would like to congratulate you for your continued service to our country. Public service is a worthy cause and it is people such as yourself who embody and demonstrate the type of leadership that inspires young Americans to serve their country and renew their pride in public service. As Chairman of

the FCC, you will face many pressing issues and difficult decisions, but I am confident that you will confront these in the fair and balanced manner for which you have been justly praised.