

**Statement of Julius Genachowski
Nominee to Serve as
Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission**

**Before the
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**

June 16, 2009

Thank you Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and other distinguished members of the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am grateful for the chance to learn about areas of interest to you, to answer your questions as best I can, and to seek your support for my nomination.

Mr. Chairman, over the years I have witnessed your commitment to American consumers, and your dedication to protecting the safety of our nation's communities. I look forward to working with you on these and other vital issues.

Senator Hutchison, I have great respect for the leadership you bring to the Committee, and I look forward to the opportunity to work with you on the important issues in this area.

I'd like to thank Senator Schumer for introducing me today—and for his decision 24 years ago to give a young college graduate his first job. Senator Schumer sets a high bar for public service, and I am honored to call him a mentor and a friend.

Please allow me to introduce the members of my family who are here today. I could not be more grateful for the love and support of my wonderful wife Rachel Goslins, and my incredible children—Jake, Lilah, and Aaron. I'm so pleased that my parents are here, Adele and Azriel Genachowski, and my two brothers, Joey and Alan Genachowski.

Mr. Chairman, it is a tremendous honor to have been nominated by President Obama to serve as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. While this hearing is an honor for me, it is something even more for my family. It is a celebration of the hope and dreams that brought my parents to the United States almost 50 years ago.

My parents are immigrants. My father fled the Nazi terror and ultimately came to the United States. My mother joined him, and together they raised a loving family and became role models for their children—my father as a hard-working businessman, my mother as a hard-working homemaker, both completely committed to family and community. From my parents, I learned the meaning of the American Dream.

I learned something else too. My father came to the U.S. to study engineering. I'll never forget the day—I was in high school, about as old as my oldest son is now—my dad and I were on a college trip to Boston. I remember him leading me into the dusty stacks of the

MIT library, and showing me engineering plans he had drafted as a graduate student. They were for a device designed to someday help blind people “read” words on paper by translating text into physical signals.

The formulas and drawings didn’t make much sense to me then—and, Dad, I confess, they still don’t—but the core lesson has remained with me:

Communications technology has the power to transform lives for the better.

We’ve all seen, and lived, the implications of the communications revolution. In the 20th century, we saw the world reshaped by communications technologies and networks—the telephone, radio and television, satellites, computers, and the birth of the Internet.

Now in the 21st century, communications has the potential to unleash new waves of innovation: increasing opportunity and prosperity, driving American competitiveness and leadership, connecting our country, strengthening our democracy—and transforming lives for the better.

The Federal Communications Commission has an important role to play in pursuing these goals, and in doing so on behalf of all Americans.

If confirmed, I look forward to learning from and working closely with the Committee on these essential topics.

In this time of profound economic challenge, our communications sector can make a significant contribution to our nation’s near-term economic recovery and long-term economic success. Congress has entrusted the FCC with the important task of developing a national broadband plan. A world-leading broadband infrastructure in America can be an ongoing engine for innovation and job creation throughout the country, from our rural towns to our inner cities, while helping address vital national challenges such as public safety and education, health care and energy independence—ultimately helping give all of our country’s children the future we dream for them.

As communications devices and networks become ever more essential to the daily lives of every American, and as the media landscape changes dramatically, the need has never been greater for an FCC that sees the world from the perspective of consumers and families.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored by the possibility of returning to government and serving our country.

My two decades of professional experience have been divided between public service and the private sector. I began as a Congressional staffer in the 1980s—I remember walking these hallways, knocking on doors, looking for a job. After law school, I was fortunate to serve as a law clerk in the courts. And I served on the staff of the FCC in the 1990s, at a time when one of the agency’s tasks was implementing the historic E-Rate provision,

championed by you, Mr. Chairman, and Senator Snowe, connecting classrooms and libraries to the Internet.

I wanted to work in government because this great country had given so much to my family and I wanted to give back, and because I believed that government can be a force for good and help improve the lives of all Americans. These are still my ideals today.

For the last decade I've worked in the private sector—with large media and technology companies as well as small businesses and entrepreneurial start-ups. I saw first-hand how communications technologies and networks can serve as foundations for innovation and for expanding our economy. The experience reinforced my deep respect for private enterprise, the indispensable engine of economic growth.

My time in the private sector also taught me what it means to operate in a dynamic and ever-changing marketplace. I learned the power of pragmatism and the danger of dogma. If confirmed, I would strive to bring that spirit of common sense to my role in government.

My career inside and outside government has convinced me that the FCC can be a model for excellence in government, fighting for consumers and families, fostering investment and innovation, through open, fair, and data-driven processes—a 21st century agency for the information age. The FCC should consult closely with Congress, and work effectively and efficiently for the American people. There are so many devoted and talented public servants at the FCC, many of whom I was fortunate to work with earlier in my career at the agency. I hope the Committee will give me the opportunity to work with them again.

Before closing, I would like to salute the work of Acting Chairman Michael Copps, and Commissioners Jonathan Adelstein and Robert McDowell. Our country has benefited greatly from their service.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you. I look forward to answering your questions.