

Testimony
presented to the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
by
The Honorable David Pryor
for nomination to the Board of Directors
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Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee:

I am honored to be here with you today and am grateful to the President for this nomination to be considered for a Board position on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

During the past several months, I have had the opportunity to read in some detail as it relates to the history, purpose, practice and ultimate mission of Public Broadcasting in our great and diverse country.

America is on the eve of celebrating forty years of public broadcasting in our country. Virtually every American citizen, in every rural and urban neighborhood, now has access to the many varied programs offered by public radio and television.

Notwithstanding the many contributions the commercial stations and new cable systems have made, more and more the average citizen in America has established a special relationship, even a bond, with their favorite programs brought to them by public broadcast and public radio.

Mr. Chairman, to me, there seems to be several common themes which have evolved from concept to commitment in these four decades:

- Fairness
- Objectivity
- Tolerance
- Knowledge
- Education
- Balance
- Perspective
- Entertainment

These characteristics of radio and television in the arena of public broadcasting have become the hallmark of this great American adventure.

I truly believe that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with its unique partnerships with member outlets, state governments, and private donors, has developed a strong family of support for the common belief that sharing the American experience with each other through public broadcast television and radio had met with enormous success. This experience has helped bring us together, to define ourselves, to explore in a very transparent way our differences and common interests.

Because of public radio and broadcast, I believe that America is a better place.

Respectfully, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it would be difficult to imagine what America might have missed had we failed some forty years ago to authorize and commit to a system of public broadcasting – *Sesame Street*. Robert McNeil and Jim Lehrer. *Antique Road Show*. *All Things Considered*. Local and national debates. *Car Talk*. Mr. Rogers. . . . a real and living part of our American landscape.

Mr. Chairman – I bring no agenda with my nomination. In fact, I bring very little expertise in the field of radio or television broadcast, especially compared to my colleagues at the witness table today and those who now sit on the Corporation Board.

But, I do hope I bring a commitment, a strong commitment, to the Corporation's continued quest for excellence.

I only hope that some of the life experiences I've had along the way can be somehow utilized to be a constructive advocate as a member of this distinguished Board.