

Testimony
presented to the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
by
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for nomination to the Board of Directors
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
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Chairman Inouye, Ranking Member Hutchison and members of the Committee, let me express my gratitude for your holding this hearing, especially at this time when the Committee's schedule is so full with many pressing issues. And, naturally, my thanks to the President for nominating me to serve on the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

I am excited at the prospect of having the opportunity of serving CPB, of having the opportunity to help to advance the cause of public broadcasting in the public interest - - a cause with which I have been deeply involved and committed for some 25 years - - and to do everything I possibly can to strengthen it.

I have long understood that public broadcasting is one of our country's most important community assets. As an American, I am very proud of what public broadcasting accomplishes across our nation.

My involvement with public broadcasting began in 1992 when I joined the Board of Directors of KCET, the PBS affiliate in Los Angeles covering Southern California. I served as Chairman of that Board between 2001 and 2003, and other than a one-year mandatory hiatus, I have been on the Board continuously. At this time, I serve on its Executive Committee, as Chair of its Programming Committee and as a member of the Audit Committee. In this time, I have come to understand better the relationship between PBS and CPB, and something of the nuances of that relationship.

(I should note that I will, of course, recuse myself if any conflict should arise between CPB and KCET or in connection with any other entity with which I may be involved as an attorney or otherwise.)

Public broadcasting fills a crucial need in our country by providing programming which might otherwise not see the light of day on commercial or pay television. Programming such as that which is designed for children, for caregivers, for pre-schoolers and, of special note, for all the elements of our increasingly diverse population.

At KCET, I saw how public television comes to grips with these issues, how local, as well as national, interests are served. For example, in our state a third of the children entering Kindergarten are unprepared. With so many single-parent and two-working-parent families, children in the 0-5 age group, during the period of their greatest brain development, are often being raised by untrained caregivers. We were able to use television to provide these caregivers with tools to improve the readiness of the children in their care for Kindergarten. Our success in the first two years of production, when the show was aired only on public television stations in California, motivated CPB to award a grant to KCET that allowed the program to go national in its third season. The programs, "A Place of Our Own" in English and "Los Ninos en Su Casa" in Spanish, are now seen on public television stations reaching over 74% of the U. S. Television Households. The programs have won numerous awards, including the George Foster Peabody Award, and the websites won the international competition for The Japan Prize, awarded to one website in the world by NHK. This is a good example of the synergy between CPB and PBS.

KCET also just premiered its newest production on PBS, an animated pre-school science program, "Sid the Science Kid," which uses the latest motion capture technology to teach children the wonders of science. The companion website is geared to help parents capture the natural curiosity of their children to facilitate scientific inquiry in the earliest years.

As Chair of KCET's Programming Committee, I have worked to support efforts to mount European co-production, which has led to a meaningful relationship with BBC on historical documentary, drama, and arts programming, including: "Copenhagen," "How Art Made the World," "Auschwitz and the Making of the Nazi State," and "Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt," which will air in 2009. This relationship is deepening, as KCET has been given the assignment to be the exclusive marketing and distribution agent for BBC World News for U.S. public television.

I must add that my belief in the power and accomplishments of public radio is equally strong and I look forward to expanding my knowledge of the shape of this medium today and its opportunity to grow in the future.

Please let me comment briefly on the importance of CPB's Community Service Grants. CSGs, as you know, are unrestricted grants to stations. They permit stations to operate -- to pay salaries, to turn on the lights and, for public television stations, to help pay PBS dues. And to acquire programming. They are crucial.

My "day job", as an entertainment lawyer for most of my career, also deals with communication and the media. This gives me an additional perspective and insights which can be helpful in serving CPB.

My interest in communications goes back to my college days and now includes service on the Board of Councilors, and Co-Chair of the Executive Committee, of the USC Annenberg School for Communications. This Board exposes me further to the current and future needs and requirements of broadcasting, journalism and the media.

My law practice and my involvement with both the Annenberg School and KCET have helped to educate me about new and evolving media and the changing media landscape. There may be an even greater future for public broadcasting if it can seize the advantages of these new technologies.

Other community involvements of mine, which range from having served as National President of The American Jewish Committee to membership on the Boards of the University of Southern California, the Pacific Council for International Affairs and the Herrhausen Institute for International Dialogue of the Deutsche Bank, will also help me to contribute more meaningfully to CPB.

If I am confirmed, my hope is to be part of the team strengthening an evolving public broadcasting system and its work in the communities across our country. I am committed to do all I can to enhance the already high quality of public broadcasting for our citizens and to work towards even

wider diversity of programming, be it news, education, information or entertainment -- always with the singular purpose of serving the interests of the American public.

My commitment is passionate and deep. I hope to have the opportunity to serve my country and public broadcasting by being confirmed as a member of the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Thank you for the opportunity for making this presentation and I look forward to answering any questions which any members of the Committee may have.

Thank you.