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December 11, 2003

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: EX PARTE NOTICE – CS 98-120, MB 03-15, 99-360, 00-167, and 00-168

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of Capitol Broadcasting Company, Inc. (CBC), Jim Goodmon and I met with Commissioner Kevin Martin and Catherine Bohigian on December 9, 2003, Commissioner Michael Copps and Jordan Goldstein on December 10, 2003, and Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein and Johanna Mikes on December 10, 2003. The topic of our conversations was two-fold: 1) how to complete the digital transition and return the analog spectrum to the government and 2) public interest obligations of broadcasters in the digital environment.

### **Digital Transition**

CBC stated that its goal is to complete the digital transition and return the analog spectrum to the government – a goal that is consistent with our national policy of moving from analog to digital. As such, CBC supports whatever regulations, legislation, industry-agency agreements or inter-industry agreements that move us toward the national goal. CBC expressed appreciation to the Commissioners for the recent action on cable interoperability and the broadcast flag and congratulated them on the recent tuner mandate court victory. However, multichannel (cable and satellite) carriage of the entire 19.4 Mbps digital signal remains the biggest roadblock to the digital transition. CBC noted that it is currently broadcasting in high-definition and multicasting on its stations in Raleigh-Durham. With multicasting, CBC offers viewers a full-time local news and weather channel. CBC expressed great enthusiasm for the flexibility of the digital signal and the programming we can now deliver in our communities.

CBC noted that although so-called dual must carry is not on the Commission agenda at this time, CBC cannot project the end of the digital transition in our lifetimes without dual carriage.



**Public Interest Obligations**

CBC noted that it supports the following public interest obligations: minimum public interest standards on each digital channel, community ascertainment, minimum public service announcements, minimum local public affairs programming, free political issue programming, but not free political advertising, and a voluntary broadcast code.

If there are questions relating to this filing, please contact the undersigned.

Best regards,

/s/ Dianne Smith

Dianne Smith  
Special Projects Counsel

cc.

Commissioner Kevin Martin  
Catherine Bohigian  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Jordan Goldstein  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Johanna Mikes