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News

BUSH PICKS MARTIN TO SUCCEED POWELL AS FCC CHAIRMAN



President Bush will elevate FCC commissioner Kevin Martin to head the commission. Martin was appointed to the commission in 2001 and will replace outgoing chairman Michael Powell, who is leaving the agency today, March 17th.

Most inside the Beltway applauded the appointment of Martin to the post of chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Nearly all the lobbies in Washington immediately began sucking up to him with very positive press releases.

"Kevin Martin is the right person at the right time to lead the FCC," said Edward Fritts of the National Association of Broadcasters. "Kevin has a passion for public service and a deep understanding and appreciation for the value of local broadcasting."

The Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association praised the move. "Commissioner Martin has long been a proponent of consumer access to innovative services and has consistently encouraged the implementation of satellite services, including television, radio and broadband, to rapidly integrate advances in technology," said SBCA President Richard DalBello.

On the cable side, Kyle McSlarrow, president and CEO of the National Cable and Telecommunications Association, said, "We look forward to continuing to work closely with Chairman Martin to maintain a deregulatory environment for competitive telecommunications services."

American Cable Association President and CEO Matt Polka said, "We appreciate that Commissioner Martin has taken significant time to know and understand the issues important to independent cable operators, and we look forward to continuing this discussion with him."



Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) said Martin "has a strong legal background in telecommunications law and has demonstrated a keen understanding of the issues before the FCC." Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) said, "The president's decision to appoint Commissioner Martin to be the next chairman of the FCC comes at an important time for consumers and for the communications and media industries."



Stevens and Inouye serve as co-chairmen of the Senate Commerce Committee.

Since Martin was previously confirmed by the Senate for his current seat on the FCC, Senate confirmation hearings and a Senate vote are not needed for him to assume his new position.

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-257317A1.pdf

Viacom board explores break up

Five years after Viacom completed its merger with CBS, the media and entertainment traded companies in an effort to unlock shareholder value and allow different businesses to pursue different custom-tailored strategies.



Is it time for musical stocks again?

Viacom Chairman and CEO Sumner Redstone said he has been exploring, along with the company's board of directors, a possible division of its businesses into separate publicly-traded companies. He provided little specifics, but hinted the following: The separation could highlight high-growth businesses, such as MTV Networks; and a separation could likely involve an entity that would combine CBS broadcast television businesses with Viacom's outdoor efforts and radio.

Compliance Guide: Digital Low Power TV/TV Translators

Issued on March 7, 2005, the FCC has given the industry a fourteen page compliance guide for Small Entity Digital Low Power Television/Television Translators. (DA 05-605 - MB Docket No. 03-185.)

For your very own copy, visit:

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-05-605A1.doc

Coming Soon: Call 811 Before Digging

If you're digging around for the phone number to call before conducting excavations where underground utilities might be found, you'll soon be able to reach any one of the nation's 71 "One Call" centers by simply dialing 811. The FCC has ordered that 811 service become operational within two years following publication of the designation in the Federal Register.

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-257293A1.doc

http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-05-59A1.doc

(Thank you CGC Communicator for the heads up on this.)

(Editor's Note: *Stay tuned. We're hoping to get our regular edition out this weekend. There will be a special feature from John Silva, one time director of engineering at KTLA in Los Angeles as he recalls his working with Lawrence Welk in the very early days of TV)*

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