

STATEMENT OF ROBERT G. MCGANN, PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER,
KENS-TV, AT FCC LOCALISM HEARING, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS – JANUARY 28, 2004

Good evening, Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps and Adelstein, Mayor Garza and other local officials. My name is Bob McGann and I thank you for the opportunity to be a panelist this evening. I am President and General Manager of local station KENS-TV and am here representing the station and its owner Belo Corp. KENS-TV has been operating in San Antonio as a CBS-affiliated station since 1950. Belo purchased the station in 1997 and I became the general manager of the station in 1998.

Belo has been in the television business in Texas since 1950, and has operated as a media company in Texas since 1842, making it the oldest continuously operated business in the state. Today, Belo owns 19 local television stations (four in Texas), 10 local or regional cable news channels (three in Texas), four daily newspapers and other media assets.

This is a hearing on Localism and I want to share with you my views on Localism, bringing to bear my 30 years as a local television broadcaster.

Let us start with the basic concept of Localism: The day of television stations being both locally owned and operated has long since passed in most television markets. My station's owner, Belo, is headquartered in Dallas and the majority of the other stations in this market are also not locally owned. However, KENS, like the other stations in this market, is locally operated. I live here in the San Antonio area, as do all of my senior managers. All of the day-to-day decisions on programming and management of KENS are made by me and my staff. In the important area of news programming, for example, our parent company does not dictate the content. Those decisions are made by the News Director at KENS under my supervision. Belo's role from its

Dallas headquarters is limited to assuring itself that KENS is being operated in accordance with Belo's values and operating principles. Those principles require that quality news and information, based on Belo's values of balance and fairness, are delivered to KENS' viewers, and that KENS and all of its employees are active corporate and individual citizens in San Antonio. That, to me, is the essence of Localism today: local operators managing their stations and serving their communities with responsive programming and active community participation.

Now let me be more specific about Localism in actual practice. We believe at KENS that a local television station must allocate a significant portion of its broadcast week to non-entertainment programming, providing a host of informative, educational, responsive programming to San Antonio viewers. This is a critical aspect of Localism, which is functioning well in San Antonio. By way of illustration, KENS recently prepared a study, using one week as the benchmark, of the total news, public affairs, and all other non-entertainment programming, *excluding commercial time*, broadcast by the market's top four network-affiliated stations. During this week, KENS broadcast 39 hours of non-entertainment programming, amounting to 23.2% of its total weekly broadcast program hours. In total, the top four stations in the market, including KENS, broadcast non-entertainment programming amounting to an aggregate average of 20.6% of their combined broadcast week. This represents a substantial amount of non-entertainment programming from the top four stations in this market.

At KENS, we ensure that our local programming is responsive to our viewers by means of both formal and informal ascertainment in our community. Throughout the year, I and other KENS management call on community leaders, such as Albert Ortiz, San Antonio Chief of Police, Dr. Ricardo Romo, President UTSA and Susan Reed, Criminal District Attorney, in an effort to find

out, from their vantage point as leaders in the community, what the problems and needs are that KENS should address in its programming. In addition, we conduct annual market surveys asking citizens for the local issues of importance to them. That information, in turn, is compiled and serves as the focal point in planning our non-entertainment programming. We also obtain input informally through personal involvement with a variety of community organizations such as the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce (of which I serve as a director).

In my view, some combination of formal and informal ascertainment, at the station's option, is the most effective way to perform this indispensable task.

Today's media marketplace demands not only responsive programming but also multiple outlets for citizens to access that programming. Like other broadcasters, KENS has creatively expanded the ways it serves local audiences. KENS has partnered with the area's major cable system, Time Warner Cable, to create NEWS 9, a 24-hour local cable news channel serving San Antonio. KENS has also partnered with the area's major daily newspaper—the *San Antonio Express News*—to create MySanAntonio.com, a local news and information website virtually combining television and newspaper resources to deliver up to the minute coverage to local citizens wherever they may access the Internet. These new offerings are driven by Localism and the marketplace—not by federal mandate.

Finally, I would like to address another key component of Localism: access to the station's airwaves. KENS supplies this vital access in a variety of ways. In the local programming area, KENS produces a weekday morning program, called Great Day San Antonio, which provides access to local artists, musicians, community leaders and community organizations. In addition, KENS airs the City of San Antonio's New Year's Eve event and is the Official Station of Fiesta,

airing three major local parades. KENS has also created the Excel Awards, which honors our area's best teachers during each school year. Through public service announcements and other activities, KENS supports numerous community organizations, such as the San Antonio Food Bank and the Salvation Army, helping raise over \$175,000 annually for these two groups alone.

To sum up, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, Localism is driven in every American television market by two powerful and historically entrenched principles. First, is the principle of community service, which is a long-established hallmark of local television stations. Local stations and their employees serve their communities because it is both personally rewarding and the right thing to do. It is also reinforced by the FCC license renewal process, which focuses on a station's performance in its community and for its viewers. Second, is the principle of economics. There are strong economic incentives, in the form of advertising dollars, which reward the top-rated stations in a market, those which provide the most-watched local news. We do not need any additional incentives to continue to serve Localism. Localism is what we are about. It is the business of local television.

Thank you.