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J. Clay Smith Jr.

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Professor J. Clay Smith, Dean
Howard University School of Law

Statement on

PR7-180 "Public Service Commission of the
District of Columbia Patricia Morris Worthy Resolution of 1987"

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICES
Tuesday, October 6, 1987

Chairman Smith and members of the Committee and Council, I am J. Clay Smith, Dean and Professor of the Howard University School of Law. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today in support of the confirmation of Patricia Morris Worthy as Chairman and Commissioner of the District of Columbia Public Service Commission. As you are aware, Howard University School of Law has a long and honorable history of service to the nation and each community in which its graduates live. Similarly, many graduates like Chairman Worthy begin their service to the community in law school. She entered Howard University School of Law in 1966. During her second year, she cofounded the National Consumer Information Center, which provided information and assistance to consumers regarding warranties, installment sales contracts, and consumer credit problems. This devotion to helping the community on the part of Ms. Worthy has steadily continued. One need only look at the varied activities she is involved in outside the Commission to realize her commitment. For example, Ms. Worthy served as Vice Chairman of the Anacostia Economic Development Corporation. This organization was involved in a project to spur economic development in the far southeast

section of the District. Currently, Ms. Worthy serves on the Board of Directors of the Public Broadcasting Network (WETA, Television 26, Radio FM 91). In this capacity, she was successful in prodding the Board of Directors of WETA to take an affirmative position against apartheid in South Africa. Additionally, I am proud to have her as an adjunct professor at the law school, where she is known as an extremely demanding professor, committed to excellence. However, her commitment to educating lawyers does not stop there. She is a member of the National Conference of Bar Examiners' Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination Committee. The Committee is charged with formulating the exams that focus on potential attorneys' knowledge of the ethical and professional requirements of practicing law. I might note with pleasure that she has placed a number of Howard Law students and graduates in utility companies, where they practice in an area of law which traditionally few blacks practiced.

Ms. Worthy is sensitive to the interests of the ratepayers and committed to balancing both ratepayers and utilities interests in order to ensure the delivery of safe, reliable and quality utility service at the lowest possible cost. I believe the many issues and decisions confronting the Commission demands leadership, intelligence, and a commitment to fairness. Chairman Worthy has demonstrated these qualities since she was first appointed to the Commission by Mayor Barry in 1980. I might also note that at a time when City Government is being criticized for

not having enough appointees from Wards 7 and 8, Ms. Worthy is a longtime resident of Ward 7. It would serve the best interests of all involved to have such a talented individual from Ward 7, serving in our government.

The utility industry, long considered staid and stable, a regulated monopoly, is entering an era of competition and deregulation. I believe Chairman Worthy possesses the expertise and ability to manage this transition by the utilities in the District of Columbia. As a member of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' (NARUC) Committee on Communications and prior service as a member of the NARUC subcommittee on the AT&T Divestiture, she has worked hard to remain at the forefront of new developments in the Communications industry. This expertise translates into the sound judgment and insight critical to making effective decisions on communications issues facing the District of Columbia.

In summary, my support for Chairman Worthy is based upon her performance and actions over the years. I believe she has demonstrated the requisite skill, competence and concern to merit my support and the support of all who desire quality regulation.