

**Remarks by Michael K. Powell  
Accepting The Media Institute's  
2023 American Horizon Award  
October 19, 2023**

Thank you, Nilda, I am grateful and humbled. You are a superb leader and I learn from you every day. I also want to thank Dick Wiley. When I was a young, green FCC Commissioner you showed me that an advocate could be honest, act with integrity, and find solutions for his clients that also advanced the public interest. I have tried to live by your example in my current role.

When I last stood on this stage, more than 20 years ago, I was truly moved to receive the Free Speech award – an award that Bob Woodward will deservedly receive shortly. It meant a great deal to me to be recognized as a champion for such a cherished constitutional value. Tonight, I am equally moved to receive the American Horizon Award as the leader of NCTA, representing the nation's internet and content companies.

To quote Joni Mitchell, "I have looked at love from both sides now." I do in fact love this industry and I am grateful to have seen it from different perspectives and to have the chance to mine the symbiotic relationship between regulator and regulated to produce quality public policy.

I want to thank Rick Kaplar and The Media Institute for this recognition, but more importantly for its unshakable commitment to free speech. The First Amendment is our most cherished right and undergirds our democracy. Our society is suffering these days and many wonder how we will get out of the mess we are in. I don't have an answer, but I am convinced that allowing people to speak freely coupled with an equal commitment to really listen underlies any solution.

As a government official, I was committed to honoring the command that I make no law abridging the freedom of speech. As CEO of a trade association representing one of the nation's most important industries, I appreciate that our forefathers added a final clause to the First Amendment. In it they established the right to "petition the Government for the redress of grievances." But this evening I have absolutely none. I have only gratitude.

Thank you.