



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

June 22, 2026

DA 26-615

Conor S. Gaffney
Protect Democracy Project
201 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 114
New Orleans, LA 70170

Berin Szoka
Tech Freedom
1500 K Street NW, Floor 2
Washington, DC 20005

Gigi Sohn
G Squared Strategies, LLC
3503 Alton Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Andrew Jay Schwartzman
Andrew Jay Schwartzman, PLLC
525 9th Street, NW, Seventh Floor
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Petition for Special Relief to
Repeal News Distortion Policy

Dear Counsel:

Petitioners, a number of former FCC officials, later joined by the Radio Television Digital News Association, have filed a document with the FCC that states that it is a “Petition for Special Relief.” In their “Petition for Special Relief,” they request that the Commission “repeal its news distortion policy in full”¹ and recognize that the agency “may not investigate or penalize broadcasters for ‘distorting,’ ‘slanting,’ or ‘staging’ the news, unless the broadcast at issue independently meets the high standard for broadcasting a dangerous hoax under 47 C.F.R. § 73.1217.”²

As former FCC officials and Petitioners may know, FCC rules recognize and permit the filing of various types of petitions and other pleadings. FCC rules also specify different requirements, deadlines, and comment cycles for pleadings based on the relevant, governing rules. Petitioners do not identify or invoke any rule that they state governs or even authorizes the pleading they have filed. We have identified a provision of the FCC’s rules—namely, Section 76.7 of the Commission’s cable rules that provide for petitions for “special relief.” But Section 76.7 petitions for special relief do not apply in this context. Those types of petitions for special relief apply to “waive any provision of . . . part 76, impose additional or different requirements, issue a ruling on a complaint or disputed question, issue a show

¹ Petition for Special Relief (filed Nov. 13, 2026) (Petition), at 1.

² *Id.* at 15.

cause order, revoke the certification of the local franchising authority, or initiate a forfeiture proceeding.”³
That is not the type of relief that Petitioners appear to be seeking in their Petition for Special Relief.

Petitioners have failed to present their request in a manner that is cognizable under our rules.

ACCORDINGLY, it is ordered that the Petition for Special Relief **IS DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE**.

Sincerely,

Alexander Sanjenis
Acting Chief, Media Bureau

³ 47 C.F.R. § 76.1(a)(1).