



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Jordan Goldstein: (202) 418-2000
Johanna Shelton: (202) 418-2300

COMMISSIONERS COPPS AND ADELSTEIN REACT TO COMCAST PUBLIC FILE VIOLATIONS AND LACK OF PROGRESS ON PUBLIC FILE RULEMAKING

Washington – In response to a complaint filed by the Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers alleging widespread violations of the Commission’s public file rules by Comcast Corporation, the FCC Enforcement Bureau today announced a consent decree with Comcast Corporation terminating the investigation. Cable operators and broadcasters are required under FCC rules to maintain and make available a public inspection file.

Commissioners Copps and Adelstein reacted: “Today’s action highlights the urgent need for the Commission to reexamine the adequacy of its public file disclosure requirements. Cable operators and broadcasters should not shy away from making information about how they serve their communities widely available to their viewing public. It’s time the Commission reaffirmed the rights of viewers to receive basic information to gauge the accountability of their media. Information should be made widely available through modern means in a standard, easy-to-understand format.”

In the late 1990s, the Commission found that members of the public were having difficulty trying to access information under existing disclosure procedures. The Commission began a proceeding to standardize and enhance the disclosure process for broadcasters in September 2000, but no action has been taken since then. “Unfortunately, while that proceeding has languished for more than four years, it’s clear that citizens are still having difficulty accessing the public files of cable operators and broadcasters,” Commissioners Copps and Adelstein stated.

One of the Commission’s proposals four years ago would require broadcasters to make the content of their public inspection files available on the station’s website. “Think of how useful it would have been for the public and political candidates in this election season if the required political advertising information was readily available to them on websites,” Commissioners Copps and Adelstein added. “We call on the Chairman to designate this for immediate Commission action.”