



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).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 10, 2011

News Media Contact:
Margaret McCarthy (202) 418-2000

STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION COLLABORATION ACT

“I am thrilled that Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Congressman John Shimkus, and Congressman Mike Doyle have introduced the Federal Communications Commission Collaboration Act. If there is only one action we could take this year to reform the FCC, this should be it.

“The inability of Commissioners to get together and talk as a group makes zero sense. The statutory bar on more than two Commissioners talking together outside a public meeting has had pernicious and unintended consequences—stifling collaborative discussions among colleagues, delaying timely decision-making, discouraging collegiality and short-changing consumers and the public interest. For almost a decade I have seen first-hand and up close the heavy costs of this prohibition.

“Elected representatives, cabinet officials, judges and just about everyone else have the opportunity for face-to-face discussion before deciding public issues. I see no reason why Commissioners of the FCC should not have the same opportunity at their disposal—especially when balanced, as this legislation is, with specific safeguards designed to preserve transparency. Reaching agreement on the complex issues pending before us is difficult enough in the best of circumstances, but is infinitely more so when we cannot even talk about them among ourselves. Each of the five Commissioners brings to the FCC special experiences and unique talents that we cannot fully leverage without communicating directly with each other.

“The Federal Communications Commission Collaboration Act is a prudent, balanced proposal that recognizes the benefits of permitting the Commission to do its business collectively while maintaining full transparency of the process. This is a reform whose time has come. I thank the Representatives for their leadership on this much needed reform and wish them success in seeing it through to enactment this year.”