



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:
August 22, 2011

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Neil Grace, 202-418-0506
Email: neil.grace@fcc.gov

FCC CHAIRMAN GENACHOWSKI CONTINUES REGULATORY REFORM TO EASE BURDEN ON BUSINESSES; ANNOUNCES ELIMINATION OF 83 OUTDATED RULES

“Fairness Doctrine” and other obsolete provisions among those deleted; Actions consistent with Chairman Genachowski’s regulatory reform agenda and commitment to act in accordance with recent Executive Order to improve regulation and regulatory review

Washington, D.C. – FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski today announced the elimination of 83 outdated and obsolete media-related rules, including Fairness Doctrine regulations. Today’s action is part of the FCC’s reform agenda, which includes retrospective review of rules, elimination of rules that are no longer needed, and revision of rules to reflect changes in technology, thereby clearing the path for greater competition, investment and job creation. Chairman Genachowski has consistently and repeatedly stated his opposition to the Fairness Doctrine, which he pressed to eliminate by the end of August. The Fairness Doctrine is not currently enforced by the FCC and has not been applied for more than 20 years.

In addition, the FCC also announced the deletion of obsolete “broadcast flag,” cable programming service tier rate, and broadcast applications and proceedings rules. The elimination of these rules adds to the over 50 outdated regulations that have already been deleted as part of Chairman Genachowski’s robust regulatory review process. Moreover, the FCC has significantly reduced Commission backlogs, including an 89% reduction in satellite licensing applications and a 30% reduction in broadcast licensing applications. The FCC is currently in the process of moving to eliminate 25 sets of data collections from industry that are no longer necessary.

Chairman Genachowski said, “Our extensive efforts to eliminate outdated regulations are rooted in our commitment to ensure that FCC rules and policies promote a healthy climate for private investment and job creation. I’m proud of the work we are doing toward our goal of being model of excellence in government. This includes our recent commitment to act in accordance with the recent Executive Order on Regulation and Independent Agencies, which is consistent with the values and philosophy we apply at the FCC.

“The elimination of the obsolete Fairness Doctrine regulations will remove an unnecessary distraction. As I have said, striking this from our books ensures there can be no mistake that what has long been a dead letter remains dead. The Fairness Doctrine holds the potential to chill free speech and the free flow of ideas and was properly abandoned over two decades ago. I am pleased we are removing these and other obsolete rules from our books.

“Our work is not done. I have directed each bureau at the FCC to conduct a review of rules within their areas with the goal of eliminating or revising rules that are outdated or place needless burdens on businesses. We are also in the process of developing a retrospective review plan, pursuant to the recent Executive Order. We will continue on this regulatory reform track – thoughtfully and diligently conducting our reviews of existing rules and taking other important steps to meet our statutory obligation and mission in a way that grows our economy, creates jobs and benefits all Americans.”