



NEWS

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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI AND COMMISSIONER MICHAEL COPPS CONVENE FIELD EVENT IN ARIZONA ON THE "INFORMATION NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES" REPORT

*Stakeholders from across the media and public interest spectrum announce
consensus, progress on key recommendations of the report*

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski and Commissioner Michael Copps attended a field event to hear from journalists, academics, businesses and the public about innovating and strengthening news and information-gathering to meet citizen needs. At the event, the FCC and stakeholders announced progress on key recommendations of the report, including common ground between leading local broadcasters and public interest groups on modernizing and making more effective FCC disclosure rules.

The event was hosted by the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University in Phoenix, Arizona.

The event brought together leading journalists, academics, businesses and the public to listen to progress from the field made in response to the staff-level FCC report, "Information Needs of Communities: The Changing Media Landscape in a Broadband Age," delivered to the FCC at an open commission meeting in June this year. In the report, the FCC Working Group on the Information Needs of Communities analyzed the current state of the media landscape and outlined a broad range of recommendations.

In this opening remarks, FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said, "The report has stimulated action among outside stakeholders. And we continue to make great strides on a fundamental recommendation of the report – achieving universal broadband access for all Americans. The report has no more important recommendation."

FCC Commissioner Michael Copps said, "We need to be a news literate electorate which is made more difficult by the prevalence of glitzy infotainment in place of quality news and information. Real news has been too often replaced by fluff. Democracy is not well-served by fluff. The FCC needs to take an active role in establishing a public-private partnership for media and news literacy."

Christopher Callahan, dean of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University said, "The FCC report is an insightful and comprehensive look at our news media ecosystem and makes important recommendations for the digital future," said "It's an honor to host Chairman Genachowski and Commissioner Copps, and we are optimistic that real action will come from the report and hearing."

Highlights of the field event include:

Consensus on basic framework for broadcaster transparency:

- Jonathan Blake, representing six major local television station groups, said that while some details remain to be worked out, in general the FCC report's recommendations on disclosure and transparency "will serve the public interest."
- Coriel Wright of Free Press said that the disclosure recommendations are "both important and necessary."

Journalism School initiative:

- Chris Callahan, dean of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University announced a new initiative from the nation's leading journalism schools, funded by the Knight Foundation, to move forward on recommendations of the Report. Journalism schools will hold events and produce detailed research papers to advance various recommendations.

Targeting federal ad spending at local media:

- Jason Klein, President and CEO, Newspaper National Network representing more than 9,000 print and online publications, expressed support for a proposal made by local television stations that existing federal advertising spending be targeted a local media, saying, "The federal government spends advertising dollars for necessary public purposes, and can better obtain value by shifting some ad spending to local media. It's a smart strategy on a number of levels...and a development that should be encouraged."
- Representatives from 34 local online news organizations in a letter presented at the event said, "[G]overnment spending on local online news enterprises could be, in a relative sense, far more beneficial than legacy spends. Even modest advertising revenue will permit us to expand news coverage, create new journalism jobs and better serve our local communities."

These statements of support echo the position put forth to the FCC earlier this year by local television news stations in response. The proposal now has broad support from local television news companies, newspapers and independent online local news enterprises.

Other developments related to the Report include:

- The Knight Foundation and the Council on Foundations announced a new effort to make detailed recommendations to the IRS about potential tax changes to remove obstacles to non-profit media innovation.
- Carolina Academic Press, announced it will publish the "Information Needs of Communities" report in book form to help increase its readership among broader audiences.

The report was produced by a group of journalists, scholars, entrepreneurs and government officials, led by Steven Waldman, a successful digital media entrepreneur and former journalist. Waldman worked for many years as a highly-respected reporter and editor at Newsweek, U.S News & World Report and WallStreetJournal.com. He was also the co-founder and CEO of Beliefnet.com, which won the National Magazine Award for General Excellence Online and was later acquired by FOX Networks Group.

**For more information about the Information Needs of Communities report, visit:
www.fcc.gov/infoneedsreport**

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