

**STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN THOMAS E. WHEELER**

Re: *Expansion of Online Public File Obligations to Cable and Satellite TV Operators and Broadcast and Satellite Radio Licensees, MB Docket No. 14-127.*

One of the most consistent themes of the Commission's recent agenda has been updating rules to reflect advances in technology in order to unleash new benefits for the American people. The FCC's "public file" rules offer a clear example of this principle in practice. Today, the Commission takes another step to modernize this pro-transparency policy for the digital age.

For decades, the Commission has required broadcasters, cable operators, DBS providers, and satellite radio licensees to maintain public inspection files, which disclose community-relevant information such as political advertising sold and data on ownership and equal employment opportunities. But there's a catch. For too long, the public could barely access the "public" file. It was maintained only on paper in file cabinets at the actual radio and TV stations. In the Internet era, that doesn't make any sense.

In 2012, the FCC took the first step to fix this problem. It adopted rules moving television station's paper public files online. Rather than being squirreled away in a file cabinet, the information is available online in a central, Commission-hosted database. TV broadcasters of all sizes completed their transition to the online file in July 2014. In December 2014, the Commission proposed to extend this policy by expanding the online public file database to include cable, DBS, broadcast radio, and satellite radio companies.

The Order adopted today finalizes that transition by requiring the remaining media services to join the TV station colleagues and post their public file documents to the FCC's online database.

To be clear, this Order includes no new disclosure requirements. It does nothing more than move the documents these companies are required to keep in paper, online. All information that the public already had access to will now just be available to the public via a different medium.

Our action is also cognizant that these companies have varied levels of resources, so we take common-sense steps to lessen the burden on the smallest of these companies by giving them more time to upload their materials.

This move to an online public file will not only make accessing the file much more convenient for members of the public, it will actually lower long-term costs for industry. The public will be able search the file without requiring assistance from station or headquarters staff, reducing the burden of maintaining the public file.

The evolution of the Internet and the expansion of broadband infrastructure have transformed the way society accesses information today. Today's action keeps pace with these changes and takes advantage of this progress.

Thank you to the Media Bureau for their work on this item.