

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Sponsorship Identification Requirements for Foreign Government-Provided Programming*, MB Docket No. 20-299.

Today the Federal Communications Commission begins a rulemaking to develop requirements to disclose when foreign governments and foreign agents buy time to broadcast content on our airwaves. This is the right thing to do.

For decades, it has been a bedrock principle in the United States that the public has a right to know the identity of those behind broadcasting. To this end, Section 317 of the Communications Act requires that programming “for which any money, service or other valuable consideration is directly or indirectly paid, or promised to or charged or accepted by, the station so broadcasting, from any person, shall, at the time the same is so broadcast, be announced as paid for or furnished, as the case may be, by such person.”

Right now, we are awash in reports that foreign actors are attempting to influence our political process and democratic elections in the United States. We also know that foreign entities are purchasing time on broadcast stations in markets across the country, including Russian government-sponsored programming right here our nation’s capital. But it’s mindboggling that the FCC has yet to update its policies under Section 317 to ensure that the public knows when foreign actors who may wish to do us harm are paying to access our airwaves and influence our citizens.

Today we begin to fix this situation. We propose to adopt specific disclosure requirements for broadcast programming that is paid for or provided by a foreign government or its representative. This is about basic transparency and it frankly shouldn’t have taken us so long. Over the course of three years, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo wrote this agency eight times to demand that the FCC do something to address the increased use of our airwaves by foreign actors. Some letters she wrote on her own; on others she was joined by her colleagues in the House of Representatives. This rulemaking is a testament to her perseverance on a matter of national security. It is also an appropriate response under the law. It has my full support.