

**STATEMENT OF
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

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

Today the Federal Communications Commission requires disclosure when foreign governments and their agents lease time to broadcast content on airwaves in the United States.

The principle that the public has a right to know the identity of those who solicit their support is a fundamental and long-standing tenet of broadcasting. In fact, 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.”

The Communications Act also prohibits foreign governments from obtaining a broadcast license. Still, we know that foreign entities are purchasing time on broadcast stations in markets across the country, including Chinese government-sponsored programming and Russian government-sponsored programming right here in our nation’s capital. This is not strictly a recent phenomenon. During the last several years, press reports about the presence of this programming have multiplied. Moreover, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo wrote this agency eight times to demand that it do something to shed light on the use of our airwaves by foreign government actors. Today’s decision is a testament to her perseverance. It is also a statement about national security and the preservation of our democratic values.

Going forward, when a broadcaster leases a portion of their airwaves, they will need to ask lessees if they or their programming are from a foreign governmental entity. If the answer is yes, a sponsorship identification will need to be placed on air and documented in the station’s public file. If the answer is no, a broadcaster will need to independently verify the lessee using the Foreign Agent Registration Act website from the Department of Justice and the FCC’s semi-annual foreign media outlet reports.

This is simple. It’s about transparency. It’s consistent with the law. I want to thank my colleagues for their contributions to this effort. I also want to thank the staff for their work, including Michelle Carey, Sarah Whitesell, Brendan Holland, Radhika Karmarkar, Chad Guo, and Julie Saulnier from the Media Bureau; Susan Aaron and David Konczal from the Office of General Counsel; Olga Madruga-Forti and Brandon Moss from the International Bureau; Jeff Gee, Chris Sova, and Phillip Rosario from the Enforcement Bureau; and Belford Lawson from the Office of Communications Business Opportunities.