

Case for Online Disclosure of Broadcaster's Public Files:

All broadcast stations are required to maintain public files that include information about station ownership, educational and community affairs programming and public complaints. Even though the information is intended for the public, accessing it is inconvenient. Anyone wanting to see these files cannot submit a request in writing or by e-mail or see them online (at present FCC is contemplating rules requiring online disclosure but hasn't happened yet) they have to visit their local broadcaster's station to inspect public files. This Sunshine Week Free Press volunteers are collaborating nationwide to visit their local broadcast stations to inspect the public files. Free Press is supplying a Checklist for volunteers to take with them to each broadcaster they attend to help them know what to look for and mark what was there or not there. Also volunteers will try to make copies of each broadcaster's Political Files to send to Free Press for qualitative analysis.

Whether its paper copies (stations usually charge at least .10 cents per page) or an electronic copy made with a digital camera, scanner etc volunteers will try to get copies of these documents that are not easily accessible. Some documents might not even be in the public file. That being said I request the FCC to finalize its rules soon.