



*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515*

*Anna G. Eshoo
Fourteenth District
California*

0487

April 16, 2012

The Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I write to express my support for the Commission's proposed rulemaking to bring the broadcaster's public file, of which the "political file" is an important component, onto the Internet.

Requiring disclosure of political advertising sales and the terms of their sale is not novel: Congress and the FCC have done so for decades under longstanding provisions of the Communications Act. I support your proposed rulemaking because it merely brings this disclosure online and into the 21st century. Where technical limitations might have made widespread availability of the public file infeasible in 1950, the failure to do so in 2012 – using the Internet – is inexcusable.

The public file plays a critical role in promoting transparency both in elections and in the use of our public airwaves. Those who argue that digitizing this information creates anticompetitive concerns are overlooking the fact that this information is already available for public inspection, albeit in antiquated form.

There is also no substitute for the information the file holds since the Federal Election Commission (FEC) collects only limited data on ad expenditures, and only as they relate to Federal issues. Today, despite its importance, the public file's information is largely inaccessible to most members of the public, buried in the basement filing cabinets of local broadcasters.

To the extent the requirement to upload information already collected by stations presents an administrative burden, I have no doubt the Commission can craft rules to ease the process for small broadcasters and minimize staff time devoted to the task. Creating an FCC-hosted website for the disclosures, rather than requiring broadcasters to host the information themselves, is an encouraging start, and I support future action to bring the public files of cable and satellite providers online as well.

Thank you for your work to improve transparency for the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anna G. Eshoo', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Anna G. Eshoo
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

June 14, 2012

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

Thank you for your letter supporting the Commission's efforts to require television broadcasters to post their public files online – including their political files. Your letter will be included in the record of the proceeding.

Congress has mandated through the Communications Act that broadcasters have unique public interest obligations, including the public availability of a broadcast station's political file. The Commission recently acted to ensure that television broadcasters' public files, including the political files, be accessible not just in hard-to-access physical filing cabinets, but online. This requirement not only promotes transparency and accessibility, but based on the record in this proceeding will result in long-term efficiencies and cost savings for broadcasters. I am pleased that the Commission took this important action to modernize its public file procedures in order to make this important information more accessible to the public.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Genachowski", written over a horizontal line.

Julius Genachowski