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For Immediate Release**FCC ELIMINATES TWO PUBLIC INSPECTION FILE REQUIREMENTS**
Action Reduces Regulatory Burdens on Commercial Broadcasters and Cable Operators

WASHINGTON – January 31, 2017 – The Federal Communications Commission today eliminated two public inspection file rules. These rules currently require: (1) commercial television and radio broadcast stations to retain, and make available to the public, copies of correspondence from viewers and listeners; and (2) cable operators to maintain and allow public inspection of the location of a cable system’s principal headend.

The Commission modernized public file rules for broadcast television licensees in 2012, moving television public files that previously were retained at stations’ local main studios to an online, Commission-hosted database. TV broadcasters completed their transition to the online file in July 2014. Moving to an online filing process made it easier for consumers to access information about their broadcast services without having to travel to the station’s main studio and reduced the cost of broadcaster compliance. In January 2016, the Commission expanded the move to online filing to cable, radio, and satellite operators.

Today’s action furthers the Commission’s progress in modernizing its public inspection file rules. The elimination of these rules will reduce regulatory burdens on commercial broadcasters and cable operators without adversely affecting the general public. Removing these requirements also will enable broadcasters and cable operators to make their entire public inspection file available online and permit them to cease maintaining local public files.

Because the designation and location of cable systems’ principal headend must be accessible to certain entities, the order requires that this information be made available to the FCC, television stations, and franchisors upon request. Alternatively, cable operators may elect voluntarily to provide this information for inclusion in the Commission’s online public inspection file database (OPIF), and may elect to make the information publicly available there. Systems that make this choice can avoid the necessity of responding to individual requests for principal headend location information.

Action by the Commission January 31, 2017 by Report and Order (FCC 17-3). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn and O’Rielly approving. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn and O’Rielly issuing separate statements.

MB Docket No. 16-161

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).