

A BILL TO AMEND THE COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934 TO REQUIRE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION TO PUBLISH ON ITS INTERNET WEBSITE THE TEXT OF ANY ITEM THAT IS ADOPTED BY VOTE OF THE COMMISSION NOT LATER THAN 24 HOURS AFTER RECEIPT OF DISSENTING STATEMENTS FROM ALL COMMISSIONERS WISHING TO SUBMIT SUCH A STATEMENT WITH RESPECT TO SUCH ITEM

MAY 23, 2016.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. UPTON, from the Committee on Energy and Commerce,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 2589]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Energy and Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 2589) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website changes to the rules of the Commission not later than 24 hours after adoption, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

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The amendments are as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. TIMELY AVAILABILITY OF ITEMS ADOPTED BY VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 4 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 154) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(p) In the case of any item that is adopted by vote of the Commission, the Commission shall publish on the Internet website of the Commission the text of such item not later than 24 hours after the Secretary of the Commission has received dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply with respect to an item that is adopted after the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Amend the title so as to read:

A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website the text of any item that is adopted by vote of the Commission not later than 24 hours after receipt of dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

H.R. 2589 requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC, the Commission, or the Agency) to publish its newly adopted rules not later than 24 hours after the last dissenting statement, if any, has been filed. This legislation is needed to increase visibility into the Commission’s rulemaking activity and to ensure timely notice to the public of the new requirements set by the FCC.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 2589 is one of a suite of bills intended to improve process and transparency at the FCC. Other bills include H.R. 2583, the FCC Process Reform Act; H.R. 2592, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on the website of the Commission documents to be voted on by the Commission; and H.R. 2593, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require identification and description on the website of the Federal Communications Commission of items to be decided on authority delegated by the Commission.

The Committee has devoted significant attention to the improvement of process and transparency at the Commission. Among other things, the Committee has been concerned about the length of time between the FCC’s adoption of new rules and the public availability of those new rules. Without clear rules, the Commission can choose to delay the publication of the item that it has voted, preventing the public and affected stakeholders from fully understanding the impact of the Commission’s actions. In the most egregious instances, the Commission has allowed an entire year to elapse after voting before releasing the text of a document to the public.¹

¹See *In the Matter of Annual Assessment of the Status of Competition in the Market for the Delivery of Video Programming*, Thirteenth Annual Report, Dkt No. 06-189, 24 FCC Rcd 542 (2009), which the FCC adopted on Nov. 27, 2007 but did not release until Jan. 16, 2009.

Part of the reason for this delay is the routine practice of granting the Commission staff “editorial privileges,”² which can vary from proofreading and cleaning up the document,³ to making changes to the text of the item to address arguments raised by dissenting Commissioners. In fact, one expert, in his review of the FCC timeline, posits that the lag between the vote and the publication of the Order becomes more likely when the Commissioners are divided and the item is controversial.⁴ Each Commissioner is entitled to issue a statement outlining the reasons for his or her dissent, and usually, the Chairman will seek to address the stated concerns in a dissent. The FCC’s general counsel notes that this is necessary to ensure that the document withstands judicial scrutiny.⁵ On the other hand, others have pointed out that dissenting views and arguments are generally expressed well in advance of the vote and therefore should pose no surprise to the drafters of the item.⁶

Lately, the lag between vote and publication is much smaller. During 2011, the average time between the adoption and release of an item was 2.2 days; the average time between the adoption of an item and its publication in the Federal Register has been 37.3 days.⁷ Even so, outliers continue to plague the Commission’s record. For example, the recent Order on the Lifeline Fund adopted at the Commission’s March Open Meeting was not released until 27 days later.⁸

H.R. 2589, as amended, requires the FCC to publish its decisions 24 hours after the last dissenting statement, if any, is filed. H.R. 2589 seeks to limit the practice of delayed publication, sometimes due to the late receipt of dissenting statements from Commissioners, while maintaining the requirements under the Administrative Procedure Act to ensure explanatory text is included with any rule changes.

HEARINGS

On April 30, 2015, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled “FCC Reauthorization: Improving Commission Transparency” to review a discussion draft entitled “To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website changes to the rules of the Commission not later than 24 hours

²The concept of “editorial privileges” is itself controversial as there does not appear to be any support for the practice in the laws governing the Commission’s process. *See e.g.* Commissioner Michael O’Rielly, “Fixing Flawed and Non-Existent Editorial Privileges,” FCC Blog, Mar. 9, 2015 at <http://www.fcc.gov/blog/fixing-flawed-and-non-existent-editorial-privileges> (“O’Rielly Blog Post”).

³See Jonathan Sallet, “The Process of Governance: The FCC & the Open Internet Order,” FCC Blog, Mar. 2, 2015 at <http://www.fcc.gov/blog/process-governance-fcc-open-internet-order>. (“Sallet Blog Post”).

⁴See Scott Wallsten, “Administrative Procedures, Bureaucracy, and Transparency: Why does the FCC Vote on Secret Texts?” Technology Policy Institute, Feb. 10, 2015 at 3 at https://www.techpolicyinstitute.org/files/wallsten_administrativeproceduresbureaucracyandtransparency.pdf.

⁵See Sallet Blog Post.

⁶See O’Rielly Blog Post, *infra* at 13.

⁷See House Energy and Commerce Committee, Staff Report on the Workload of the Federal Communications Commission (Nov. 15, 2011) at 3, at <https://energycommerce.house.gov/news-center/analyses/committee-releases-report-workload-federal-communications-commission>.

⁸See *in the Matter of Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization, et al.*, Third Report and order, Further Report and Order, and Order on Reconsideration, WC Dkt Nos. 11–42, 09–197, 10–90, 31 FCC Rcd 973 (2016).

after adoption.” The discussion draft was identical to H.R. 2589. The Subcommittee received testimony from:

- Tom Wheeler, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission and
- Michael O’Rielly, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission.

COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

On May 20, 2015, the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology met in open markup session and forwarded a discussion of a draft entitled “To amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website changes to the rules of the Commission not later than 24 hours after adoption,” without amendment, to the full Committee by a voice vote.

Representative Ellmers introduced H.R. 2589 on June 1, 2015. H.R. 2589 was identical to the discussion draft forwarded by the Subcommittee.

On April 26, 27, and 28, 2016, the Committee on Energy and Commerce met in open markup session and ordered H.R. 2589, as amended, reported to the House by a voice vote.

COMMITTEE VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee to list the record votes on the motion to report legislation and amendments thereto. There were no record votes taken in connection with ordering H.R. 2589 reported.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee held a hearing and made findings that are reflected in this report.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal and objective of H.R. 2589 is to increase transparency at the FCC to ensure that the agency provides adopted rules to the public in a timely manner. Specifically, the bill requires the FCC to publish the rules adopted within 24 hours after the last dissenting statement, if any, is filed.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY, ENTITLEMENT AUTHORITY, AND TAX EXPENDITURES

In compliance with clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that H.R. 2589 would result in no new or increased budget authority, entitlement authority, or tax expenditures or revenues.

EARMARK, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, AND LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

In compliance with clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds that H.R. 2589 contains no earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

The Committee adopts as its own the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATE

Pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following is the cost estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 17, 2016.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
*Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2589, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website the text of any item that is adopted by a vote of the Commission not later than 24 hours after receipt of dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Kathleen Gramp.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 2589—A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to publish on its Internet website the text of any item that is adopted by vote of the Commission not later than 24 hours after receipt of dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item

H.R. 2589 would establish deadlines for the publication of certain information developed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC is an independent agency governed by a five-member commission that regulates various aspects of wireline (telephone, for example), wireless, cable, and satellite communications. Under this bill, the text of any decisions that are subject to a vote by the commissioners would have to be published on the agency's website within 24 hours after the secretary of the commission receives the text of any dissenting statements.

Based on information from the FCC, CBO estimates that complying with the requirements in H.R. 2589 would have no significant effect on the agency's workload or costs. Moreover, under current law, the FCC is authorized to collect fees sufficient to offset the cost of its regulatory activities each year. Therefore, CBO estimates that the net cost to implement H.R. 2589 would be negligible, assuming annual appropriation actions consistent with the

agency's authorities. Because enacting H.R. 2589 would not affect direct spending or revenues, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2589 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

H.R. 2589 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Kathleen Gramp. The estimate was approved by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

FEDERAL MANDATES STATEMENT

The Committee adopts as its own the estimate of Federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

DUPPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No provision of H.R. 2589 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111-139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULE MAKINGS

The Committee estimates that enacting H.R. 2589 specifically directs to be completed 0 rule makings within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 551.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STATEMENT

No advisory committees within the meaning of section 5(b) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act were created by this legislation.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATION

Section 1. Timely availability of changes to rules of the Commission.

This section requires the Commission to post the text of its rules (i.e., the actual modifications to the Code of Federal Regulations) on its Internet website within 24 hours of the filing of the last dissenting statement, if any.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (new matter is printed in italic

and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

* * * * *

SEC. 4. PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE COMMISSION.

(a) The Federal Communications Commission (in this Act referred to as the "Commission") shall be composed of five Commissioners appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, one of whom the President shall designate as chairman.

(b)(1) Each member of the Commission shall be a citizen of the United States.

(2)(A) No member of the Commission or person employed by the Commission shall—

(i) be financially interested in any company or other entity engaged in the manufacture or sale of telecommunications equipment which is subject to regulation by the Commission;

(ii) be financially interested in any company or other entity engaged in the business of communication by wire or radio or in the use of the electromagnetic spectrum;

(iii) be financially interested in any company or other entity which controls any company or other entity specified in clause (i) or clause (ii), or which derives a significant portion of its total income from ownership of stocks, bonds, or other securities of any such company or other entity; or

(iv) be employed by, hold any official relation to, or own any stocks, bonds, or other securities of, any person significantly regulated by the Commission under this Act;

except that the prohibitions established in this subparagraph shall apply only to financial interests in any company or other entity which has a significant interest in communications, manufacturing, or sales activities which are subject to regulation by the Commission.

(B)(i) The Commission shall have authority to waive, from time to time, the application of the prohibitions established in subparagraph (A) to persons employed by the Commission if the Commission determines that the financial interests of a person which are involved in a particular case are minimal, except that such waiver authority shall be subject to the provisions of section 208 of title 18, United States Code. The waiver authority established in this subparagraph shall not apply with respect to members of the Commission.

(ii) In any case in which the Commission exercises the waiver authority established in this subparagraph, the Commission shall publish notice of such action in the Federal Register and shall furnish notice of such action to the appropriate committees of each House of the Congress. Each such notice shall include information regarding the identity of the person receiving the waiver, the position held by such person, and the nature of the financial interests which are the subject of the waiver.

(3) The Commission, in determining whether a company or other entity has a significant interest in communications, manufacturing, or sales activities which are subject to regulation by the Commission, shall consider (without excluding other relevant factors)—

- (A) the revenues, investments, profits, and managerial efforts directed to the related communications, manufacturing, or sales activities of the company or other entity involved, as compared to the other aspects of the business of such company or other entity;
- (B) the extent to which the Commission regulates and oversees the activities of such company or other entity;
- (C) the degree to which the economic interests of such company or other entity may be affected by any action of the Commission; and
- (D) the perceptions held by the public regarding the business activities of such company or other entity.

(4) Members of the Commission shall not engage in any other business, vocation, profession, or employment while serving as such members.

(5) The maximum number of commissioners who may be members of the same political party shall be a number equal to the least number of commissioners which constitutes a majority of the full membership of the Commission.

(c) Commissioners shall be appointed for terms of five years and until their successors are appointed and have been confirmed and taken the oath of office, except that they shall not continue to serve beyond the expiration of the next session of Congress subsequent to the expiration of said fixed term of office; except that any person chosen to fill a vacancy shall be appointed only for the unexpired term of the Commissioner whom he succeeds. No vacancy in the Commission shall impair the right of the remaining commissioners to exercise all the powers of the Commission.

(d) Each Commissioner shall receive an annual salary at the annual rate payable from time to time for level IV of the Executive Schedule, payable in monthly installments. The Chairman of the Commission, during the period of his service as Chairman, shall receive an annual salary at the annual rate payable from time to time for level III of the Executive Schedule.

(e) The principal office of the Commission shall be in the District of Columbia, where its general sessions shall be held; but whenever the convenience of the public or of the parties may be promoted or delay or expense prevented thereby, the Commission may hold special sessions in any part of the United States.

(f)(1) The Commission shall have authority, subject to the provisions of the civil-service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, as amended, to appoint such officers, engineers, accountants, attorneys, inspectors, examiners, and other employees as are necessary in the exercise of its functions.

(2) Without regard to the civil-service laws, but subject to the Classification Act of 1949, each commissioner may appoint three professional assistants and a secretary, each of whom shall perform such duties as such commissioner shall direct. In addition, the chairman of the Commission may appoint, without regard to the civil-service laws, but subject to the Classification Act of 1949, an

administrative assistant who shall perform such duties as the chairman shall direct.

(3) The Commission shall fix a reasonable rate of extra compensation for overtime services of engineers in charge and radio engineers of the Field Engineering and Monitoring Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission, who may be required to remain on duty between the hours of 5 o'clock postmeridian and 8 o'clock antemeridian or on Sundays or holidays to perform services in connection with the inspection of ship radio equipment and apparatus for the purposes of part II of title III of this Act or the Great Lakes Agreement, on the basis of one-half day's additional pay for each two hours or fraction thereof of at least one hour that the overtime extends beyond 5 o'clock postmeridian (but not to exceed two and one-half days' pay for the full period from 5 o'clock postmeridian to 8 o'clock antemeridian) and two additional days' pay for Sunday or holiday duty. The said extra compensation for overtime services shall be paid by the master, owner, or agent of such vessel to the local United States collector of customs or his representative, who shall deposit such collection into the Treasury of the United States to an appropriately designated receipt account: *Provided*, That the amounts of such collections received by the said collector of customs or his representatives shall be covered into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts; and the payments of such extra compensation to the several employees entitled thereto shall be made from the annual appropriations for salaries and expenses of the Commission: *Provided further*, That to the extent that the annual appropriations which are hereby authorized to be made from the general fund of the Treasury are insufficient, there are hereby authorized to be appropriated from the general fund of the Treasury such additional amounts as may be necessary to the extent that the amounts of such receipts are in excess of the amounts appropriated: *Provided further*, That such extra compensation shall be paid if such field employees have been ordered to report for duty and have so reported whether the actual inspection of the radio equipment or apparatus takes place or not: *And provided further*, That in those ports where customary working hours are other than those hereinabove mentioned, the engineers in charge are vested with authority to regulate the hours of such employees so as to agree with prevailing working hours in said ports where inspections are to be made, but nothing contained in this proviso shall be construed in any manner to alter the length of a working day for the engineers in charge and radio engineers or the overtime pay herein fixed: and *Provided further*, That, in the alternative, an entity designated by the Commission may make the inspections referred to in this paragraph.

(4)(A) The Commission, for purposes of preparing or administering any examination for an amateur station operator license, may accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of any individual who holds an amateur station operator license of a higher class than the class of license for which the examination is being prepared or administered. In the case of examinations for the highest class of amateur station operator license, the Commission may accept and employ such services of any individual who holds such class of license.

(B)(i) The Commission, for purposes of monitoring violations of any provision of this Act (and of any regulation prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the amateur radio service, may—

- (I) recruit and train any individual licensed by the Commission to operate an amateur station; and
- (II) accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of such individual.

(ii) The Commission, for purposes of recruiting and training individuals under clause (i) and for purposes of screening, annotating, and summarizing violation reports referred under clause (i), may accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of any amateur station operator organization.

(iii) The functions of individuals recruited and trained under this subparagraph shall be limited to—

- (I) the detection of improper amateur radio transmissions;
- (II) the conveyance to Commission personnel of information which is essential to the enforcement of this Act (or regulations prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the amateur radio service; and
- (III) issuing advisory notices, under the general direction of the Commission, to persons who apparently have violated any provision of this Act (or regulations prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the amateur radio service.

Nothing in this clause shall be construed to grant individuals recruited and trained under this subparagraph any authority to issue sanctions to violators or to take any enforcement action other than any action which the Commission may prescribe by rule.

(C)(i) The Commission, for purposes of monitoring violations of any provision of this Act (and of any regulation prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the citizens band radio service, may—

- (I) recruit and train any citizens band radio operator; and
- (II) accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of such operator.

(ii) The Commission, for purposes of recruiting and training individuals under clause (i) and for purposes of screening, annotating, and summarizing violation reports referred under clause (i), may accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of any citizens band radio operator organization. The Commission, in accepting and employing services of individuals under this subparagraph, shall seek to achieve a broad representation of individuals and organizations interested in citizens band radio operation.

(iii) The functions of individuals recruited and trained under this subparagraph shall be limited to—

- (I) the detection of improper citizens band radio transmissions;
- (II) the conveyance to Commission personnel of information which is essential to the enforcement of this Act (or regulations prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the citizens band radio service; and
- (III) issuing advisory notices, under the general direction of the Commission, to persons who apparently have violated any provision of this Act (or regulations prescribed by the Commission under this Act) relating to the citizens band radio service.

Nothing in this clause shall be construed to grant individuals recruited and trained under this subparagraph any authority to issue sanctions to violators or to take any enforcement action other than any action which the Commission may prescribe by rule.

(D) The Commission shall have the authority to endorse certification of individuals to perform transmitter installation, operation, maintenance, and repair duties in the private land mobile services and fixed services (as defined by the Commission by rule) if such certification programs are conducted by organizations or committees which are representative of the users in those services and which consist of individuals who are not officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(E) The authority of the Commission established in this paragraph shall not be subject to or affected by the provisions of part III of title 5, United States Code, or section 3679(b) of the Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 665(b)).

(F) Any person who provides services under this paragraph shall not be considered, by reason of having provided such services, a Federal employee.

(G) The Commission, in accepting and employing services of individuals under subparagraphs (A) and (B), shall seek to achieve a broad representation of individuals and organizations interested in amateur station operation.

(H) The Commission may establish rules of conduct and other regulations governing the service of individuals under this paragraph.

(I) With respect to the acceptance of voluntary uncompensated services for the preparation, processing, or administration of examinations for amateur station operator licenses, pursuant to subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, individuals, or organizations which provide or coordinate such authorized volunteer services may recover from examinees reimbursement for out-of-pocket costs.

(5)(A) The Commission, for purposes of preparing and administering any examination for a commercial radio operator license or endorsement, may accept and employ the services of persons that the Commission determines to be qualified. Any person so employed may not receive compensation for such services, but may recover from examinees such fees as the Commission permits, considering such factors as public service and cost estimates submitted by such person.

(B) The Commission may prescribe regulations to select, oversee, sanction, and dismiss any person authorized under this paragraph to be employed by the Commission.

(C) Any person who provides services under this paragraph or who provides goods in connection with such services shall not, by reason of having provided such service or goods, be considered a Federal or special government employee.

(g)(1) The Commission may make such expenditures (including expenditures for rent and personal services at the seat of government and elsewhere, for office supplies, lawbooks, periodicals, and books of reference, for printing and binding, for land for use as sites for radio monitoring stations and related facilities, including living quarters where necessary in remote areas, for the construction of such stations and facilities, and for the improvement, furnishing, equipping, and repairing of such stations and facilities and

of laboratories and other related facilities (including construction of minor subsidiary buildings and structures not exceeding \$25,000 in any one instance) used in connection with technical research activities), as may be necessary for the execution of the functions vested in the Commission and as may be appropriated for by the Congress in accordance with the authorizations of appropriations established in section 6. All expenditures of the Commission, including all necessary expenses for transportation incurred by the commissioners or by their employees, under their orders, in making any investigation or upon any official business in any other places than in the city of Washington, shall be allowed and paid on the presentation of itemized vouchers therefor approved by the chairman of the Commission or by such other members or officer thereof as may be designated by the Commission for that purpose.

(2)(A) If—

(i) the necessary expenses specified in the last sentence of paragraph (1) have been incurred for the purpose of enabling commissioners or employees of the Commission to attend and participate in any convention, conference, or meeting;

(ii) such attendance and participation are in furtherance of the functions of the Commission; and

(iii) such attendance and participation are requested by the person sponsoring such convention, conference, or meeting;

then the Commission shall have authority to accept direct reimbursement from such sponsor for such necessary expenses.

(B) The total amount of unreimbursed expenditures made by the Commission for travel for any fiscal year, together with the total amount of reimbursements which the Commission accepts under subparagraph (A) for such fiscal year, shall not exceed the level of travel expenses appropriated to the Commission for such fiscal year.

(C) The Commission shall submit to the appropriate committees of the Congress, and publish in the Federal Register, quarterly reports specifying reimbursements which the Commission has accepted under this paragraph.

(D) The provisions of this paragraph shall cease to have any force or effect at the end of fiscal year 1994.

(E) Funds which are received by the Commission as reimbursements under the provisions of this paragraph after the close of a fiscal year shall remain available for obligation.

(3)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in furtherance of its functions the Commission is authorized to accept, hold, administer, and use unconditional gifts, donations, and bequests of real, personal, and other property (including voluntary and uncompensated services, as authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code).

(B) The Commission, for purposes of providing radio club and military-recreational call signs, may utilize the voluntary, uncompensated, and unreimbursed services of amateur radio organizations authorized by the Commission that have tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) For the purpose of Federal law on income taxes, estate taxes, and gift taxes, property or services accepted under the authority of subparagraph (A) shall be deemed to be a gift, bequest, or devise to the United States.

(D) The Commission shall promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of this paragraph. Such regulations shall include provisions to preclude the acceptance of any gift, bequest, or donation that would create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

(h) Three members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum thereof. The Commission shall have an official seal which shall be judicially noticed.

(i) The Commission may perform any and all acts, make such rules and regulations, and issue such orders, not inconsistent with this Act, as may be necessary in the execution of its functions.

(j) The Commission may conduct its proceedings in such manner as will best conduce to the proper dispatch of business and to the ends of justice. No commissioner shall participate in any hearing or proceeding in which he has a pecuniary interest. Any party may appear before the Commission and be heard in person or by attorney. Every vote and official act the Commission shall be entered of record, and its proceedings shall be public upon the request of any party interested. The Commission is authorized to withhold publication of records or proceedings containing secret information affecting the national defense.

(k) The Commission shall make an annual report to Congress, copies of which shall be distributed as are other reports transmitted to Congress. Such reports shall contain—

(1) such information and data collected by the Commission as may be considered of value in the determination of questions connected with the regulation of interstate and foreign wire and radio communication and radio transmission of energy;

(2) such information and data concerning the functioning of the Commission as will be of value to Congress in appraising the amount and character of the work and accomplishments of the Commission and the adequacy of its staff and equipment;

(3) an itemized statement of all funds expended during the preceding year by the Commission, of the sources of such funds, and of the authority in this Act or elsewhere under which such expenditures were made; and

(4) specific recommendations to Congress as to additional legislation which the Commission deems necessary or desirable, including all legislative proposals submitted for approval to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(l) All reports of investigations made by the Commission shall be entered of record, and a copy thereof shall be furnished to the party who may have complained, and to any common carrier or licensee that may have been complained of.

(m) The Commission shall provide for the publication of its reports and decisions in such form and manner as may be best adapted for public information and use, and such authorized publications shall be competent evidence of the reports and decisions of the Commission therein contained in all courts of the United States and of the several States without any further proof or authentication thereof.

(n) Rates of compensation of persons appointed under this section shall be subject to the reduction applicable to officers and employees of the Federal Government generally.

(o) For the purpose of obtaining maximum effectiveness from the use of radio and wire communications in connection with safety of life and property, the Commission shall investigate and study all phases of the problem and the best methods of obtaining the co-operation and coordination of these systems.

(p) In the case of any item that is adopted by vote of the Commission, the Commission shall publish on the Internet website of the Commission the text of such item not later than 24 hours after the Secretary of the Commission has received dissenting statements from all Commissioners wishing to submit such a statement with respect to such item.

* * * * *

