



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060-0430; FR ID 158590]

Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

DATES: Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email PRA@fcc.gov and to nicole.ongele@fcc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele, (202) 418-2991.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

OMB Control Number: 3060-0430.

Title: Section 1.1206, Permit-but-Disclose Proceedings.

Form Number: N/A.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions; Federal Government; and State, local, or tribal governments.

Number of Respondent and Responses: 11,500 respondents; 34,500 responses.

Frequency of Response: On occasion reporting requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain benefits. Statutory authority for this collection of information is contained in sections 4(i) and (j), 303(r), and 409 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and (j), 303(r), and 409.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.75 hours (45 minutes).

Total Annual Burden: 25,875 hours.

Total Annual Cost: No cost.

Needs and Uses: The Commission's rules, under 47 CFR 1.1206, require that a public record be made of ex parte presentations (i.e., written presentations not served on all parties to the proceeding or oral

presentations as to which all parties have not been given notice and an opportunity to be present) to decision-making personnel in "permit-but-disclose" proceedings, such as notice-and-comment rulemakings and declaratory ruling proceedings.

On February 2, 2011, the FCC released a Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, GC Docket Number 10-43, FCC 11-11, which amended and reformed the Commission's rules on ex parte presentations (47 CFR 1.1206(b)(2)) made in the course of Commission rulemakings and other permit-but-

disclose proceedings. The modifications to the existing rules adopted in this Report and Order require that parties file more descriptive summaries of their ex parte contacts, by ensuring that other parties and the public have an adequate opportunity to review and respond to information submitted ex parte, and by improving the FCC's oversight and enforcement of the ex parte rules. The modified ex parte rules which contain information collection requirements which OMB approved on December 6, 2011, are as follows:

- (1) Ex parte notices will be required for all oral ex parte presentations in permit-but-disclose proceedings, not just for those presentations that involve new information or arguments not already in the record;
- (2) If an oral ex parte presentation is limited to material already in the written record, the notice must contain either a succinct summary of the matters discussed or a citation to the page or paragraph number in the party's written submission(s) where the matters discussed can be found;
- (3) Notices for all ex parte presentations must include the name of the person(s) who made the ex parte presentation as well as a list of all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the presentation was made;
- (4) Notices of ex parte presentations made outside the Sunshine period must be filed within two business days of the presentation;
- (5) The Sunshine period will begin on the day (including business days, weekends, and holidays) after issuance of the Sunshine notice, rather than when the Sunshine Agenda is issued (as the current rules provide);
- (6) If an ex parte presentation is made on the day the Sunshine notice is released, an ex parte notice must be submitted by the next business day, and any reply would be due by the following business day. If a permissible ex parte presentation is made during the Sunshine period (under an exception to the Sunshine period prohibition), the ex parte notice is due by the end of the same day on which the presentation was made, and any reply would need to be filed by the next business day. Any reply must be in writing and limited to the issues raised in the ex parte notice to which the reply is directed;
- (7) Commissioners and agency staff may continue to request ex parte presentations during the Sunshine period, but these presentations should be limited to the specific information required by the Commission;
- (8) Ex parte notices must be submitted electronically in machine-readable format. PDF images created by scanning a paper document may not be submitted, except in cases in which a word-processing version of the document is not available. Confidential information may continue to be submitted by paper filing, but a redacted version must be filed electronically at the same time the paper filing is submitted. An exception to the electronic filing requirement will be made in cases in which the filing party claims hardship. The basis

for the hardship claim must be substantiated in the ex parte filing; (9) To facilitate stricter enforcement of the ex parte rules, the Enforcement Bureau is authorized to levy forfeitures for ex parte rule violations; (10) Copies of electronically filed ex parte notices must also be sent electronically to all staff and Commissioners present at the ex parte meeting so as to enable them to review the notices for accuracy and completeness. Filers may be asked to submit corrections or further information as necessary for compliance with the rules; and (11) Parties making permissible ex parte presentations in restricted proceedings must conform and clarify rule changes when filing an ex parte notice with the Commission.

The information is used by parties to permit-but-disclose proceedings, including interested members of the public, to respond to the arguments made and data offered in the presentations. The responses may then be used by the Commission in its decision-making.

The availability of the ex parte materials ensures that the Commission's decisional processes are fair, impartial, and comport with the concept of due process in that all interested parties can know of and respond to the arguments made to the decision-making officials.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

Marlene Dortch,
Secretary.
Office of the Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2023-16508 Filed: 8/2/2023 8:45 am; Publication Date: 8/3/2023]