



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

**End of Year Statement from
Chairman Lee E. Goodman
December 2014**

The Federal Election Commission has concluded a productive and constructive year. We have accomplished many important achievements and there is much credit to be shared.

As we began the year, most observers agreed that the Commission needed to update our regulations—and we did. After five years of unnecessary gridlock, the Commission finally amended our regulations to comply with the Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court in *Citizens United v. FEC*. In the process we clarified several rules that vexed even the most trained practitioners. We also amended our regulations to comply with the Supreme Court's decision in *McCutcheon v. FEC*. These rulemakings eliminated about five pages of unconstitutional regulations. We can credit Vice Chair Ann Ravel and Commissioner Caroline Hunter for this bipartisan progress.

We also had a fair degree of success in issuing advisory opinions. Of particular significance, the Commission helped political parties fund their conventions. And we facilitated the use of new technology, including providing guidance on the use of bitcoins and online donation platforms that facilitate citizen participation in elections.

We held two substantive forums. At one the Commission heard from political parties at all levels how counterproductive many regulations are and how we can make the parties more effective democratic institutions. At another forum, we heard various ideas from the public for improving the Commission's website and transparency of the campaign finance data filed with the Commission. This input has assisted the Commission's ongoing project to redesign our website.

On the administrative side, we strengthened and improved the agency as an institution. We started the year with challenges in our Information Technology infrastructure. We came together and fixed most of the problems, thanks principally to the conscientious attention of Commissioner Steven Walther and our Chief Information Officer Alec Palmer and his team. We dramatically increased expenditures on IT to deploy new and faster servers with critical firewalls, a new data warehouse, new security software and services, and all new redundant broadband connections. For the public's use, we deployed a new enterprise search function that has been widely applauded and, for the first time, online registration for new political committees.

We also launched several new and exciting IT projects that are underway and expected to be completed in 2015, including a new FEC mobile application so that the public can easily

access campaign finance data on mobile devices and tablets. The Commission's website redesign is well underway. And in the first quarter of 2015 a new software system will be deployed to automate processing of paper filings. Commissioner Walther and Vice Chair Ravel deserve much credit for guiding these initiatives.

Our Chief Financial Officer, Judy Berning, obtained a clean financial audit. American taxpayers and Congress can have confidence in our agency's expenditure of public resources.

Every division in our Office of General Counsel was productive this year with everything from ethics compliance to subpoena compliance. The Policy Division worked hard to provide advisory opinion requestors, as well as Commissioners, helpful and responsive service. Likewise, they provided substantial expert assistance in the Commission's rulemakings. The Litigation Division has kept up with a busy litigation docket and put in long hours. The Administrative Law Division has produced hundreds of thousands of documents to Congress and citizens to make our agency more transparent to the public. And this fall the Enforcement Division advanced a backlog of enforcement cases to the Commission for consideration.

The Reports Analysis Division began the year deeply backlogged and short staffed. The Commission hired seven new analysts and RAD reviewed 122,000 filings totaling over 16 million pages and sent over 10,000 letters requesting additional information to filers. RAD fulfilled critical customer service duties, responding to about 11,000 telephone inquiries to head off problems and help citizens comply with our regulations. RAD also had the courage to issue a customer service survey and received positive ratings from the committees we regulate.

The Information Division conducted numerous educational seminars to encourage compliance and launched new Internet based training sessions and webinars to expand the reach of its seminars. It was my pleasure to participate in several seminars. The Information Division's programs and publications are of great assistance to the American public.

We also treated our colleagues fairly and respectfully. I personally enjoyed getting to know many colleagues this year and I benefitted tremendously by walking around the building to meet many of our colleagues and learning about their work. We work with many remarkable people and we should continue to improve our work environment.

Finally, we as a Commission engaged in spirited debates on a range of important issues, including the definition of political committee, the significance of three to three votes, due process and fairness in the Commission's enforcement procedures, cell phone banner ads, free press rights, and the Commission's continuing adherence to the 2006 Internet freedom rule and regulation of YouTube videos. All of this debate has been civil, constructive, and in good service to the American people who rely on us to air these important issues.

Through it all, our Commission managed to act by majority vote in 93% of all matters (administrative and substantive), and to act by majority vote in 86% of substantive matters. That's a good record for a bipartisan agency that must delicately balance First Amendment rights and regulation of democratic action every day we come to work.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as Chairman of the Federal Election Commission in 2014. I congratulate my fellow Commissioners and the many accomplished and committed professionals who worked very hard to make this a constructive year in behalf of the American people we serve.