

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 20, 2016

The Honorable Tom Wheeler, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

We write to respectfully request that you ensure the full disclosure of the sponsors of political advertisements, as required by Section 317 of the Communications Act of 1934. In today's political reality of non-stop campaigning, our system continues to fail the American people by allowing special interests and shadow groups to flood our airwaves with anonymous ads, with no disclosure whatsoever. We believe the Federal Communications Commission has the responsibility and legal authority to require disclosure of the actual donors behind these ads.

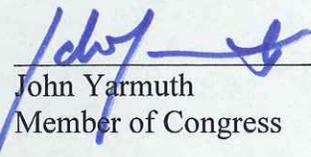
Section 317 and the associated FCC regulations require broadcasters to ensure that the "true identity" of the sponsors of political advertisements be disclosed on the air during the ad. However, for decades the FCC has failed to engage in any meaningful enforcement of Section 317. This is because the FCC currently enforces these regulations under a staff interpretation from 1979 which deems the organization that claims "editorial control" over the ad to be the true sponsor. In the new era of non-disclosing political organizations with intentionally opaque names, this interpretation is woefully out of date. While a non-disclosing organization may in fact have had editorial control over the advertisement, the true sponsors of the advertisement are those who contributed the money to pay for it.

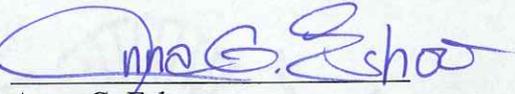
An overwhelming majority of the American public believe that groups spending money to influence our elections should be required to publically release their donors. The Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld disclosure requirements. In fact, the *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon* decisions both discuss the importance of disclosure to protect the public from corruption, real or perceived. Strong enforcement of Section 317 will ensure a level of honesty currently missing from campaign discourse and improve transparency in our political system.

We therefore urge you to use the statutory authority granted to you in the Communications Act to require disclosure of the *true* sponsors of political advertisements so that the American public knows exactly who is trying to influence them over the public airwaves.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

Dina Torres

K. Reese HI-01

Mike Dyl PA-14

Katherine Clark MA-5

Val Ego MA-7

Joni Brown CA-26

Fans DeLette CO-1

Anna May Funes NH-3

Pho A. Reed PA-1

H. H. ... AI

Anna Hal  
MD-4

Chai Busto - IL-17

Drake F. Ekins MD-4

John Carney DE-AL

Elizabeth A. Esty CT-5

Mike ... VA-11/12

Y. King ... AZ-1

Adam B. Schiff

Joseph

Walter D. All

Ben. L. ... NM.3

Jim Lan ...

Aaron Davis CA 53

Red Datch FZ-21

... TX-29

Louis Slaughter NY 25

... CA 17

Paul D. ... NY-20

... CA 3

Pat Lowery

raig Capps

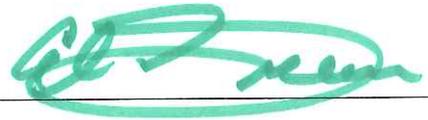
Don Matsui

Jim McDermott

Mike Shum

David Price

Tony Cardenas CA-29



James McCurt  
Richard for Nolan

Pete A. DeFazio  
James M. CA-34

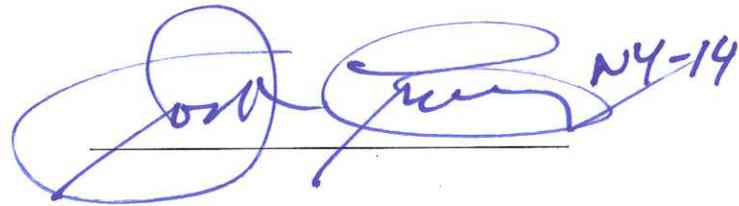
Marcy Kaptan



Deborah I. Dwyer

Matthew C. Host PA-17

Alice D. Hastings

 NY-14

James C. Blain  


Joe Courtney CT-02

Keith Ellison MN-5

Ami B. CA-07

 CA-02

Rich Zanne

Gary W. Hunt

Cher Fells

John G. N.S.-8

David Dwyer

Samuel Francis OR-1

Alan Grayson, NC

Donald W. Adelman NJ-2

John N. Castro

Karen Bran CA 37

Steve Israel

John H.

David Cutler

Marcia L. Judge

Henry Hays

Yvette D. Parks

Erick L. Engel

Jay Beatty

Daniel Lipinski

Kurt Schroeder

Pat Kelly

Jim H

Gubertus NC-1

[Signature] WA-06

[Signature]

Ruben Herrojo

Hy Alley TX-28<sup>th</sup>

Pete Aguilar CA-31

Frank Johnson

John Conyers Jr.

David Scott

Blairford

Tony Dockett IL-08

[Signature] FLA-22

Earl Bl

[Signature]

Denny Heck WA-10

Donald Trump

Flower-N-5

Eric Swalwell

Juan Vargas CA-51

MM

MV TB3

John B. Loefer

Sam Gejdert NJ-18

Frank Pallone

Allyson Loughery MA-08

Dave Loefer (IT-02)

Dan Kilde MI-5

Bob Latta MI 14

Paul Wilson FL-21

Paul M. Gohmert

Jimmy McHenry

Walter Williams

Tim Ryan

Billy McCall

Bill Pasarell Jr

Chuck

John S. Neal

Archie J. Gray

John L. Baker

Jerrold Nodder

Weki Somgas

Beto O'Rourke

Ed Jalil  
Colo #

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

C. A. Dutch Ruppersberg

Nommayor

Leah Ramez

Ted M. Lee

Swartz Sean

Gene F. Rapoport  
Ca 32

Lucille Raykel-Allard

Paul G. Case

AP 4-24

[Signature]

Frank T. Kelly MA 9

Mark Taker CA-41

Steve Cohen TN 9

Mark [unclear] WI-02

Melie Speer CA-14

John [unclear] CA-19

John Lewis

John DeBee

Samuel R. Bushong

Patrick Muey

[Signature] CA-03

Kathy Coth

[Signature]

Danny D. Davis

Jennifer N.J. 8th

Leanne Savely CA-46

Jon Schaberg IL-9

Alan Lowenthal CA-47

~~Cory M. ...~~

Greg Meng NY06

~~Greg ...~~

Senator ...

... 13th ...

... 1st ...

... Lee

... Kind

Jim Langevin RI-2

... 1st ...

... 1st ... IL-5

...

... CA-52

... 1st ...

Sat. Hill

Alan Smith

Michelle Lujan Grisham

Judy Chen

Bob Lujan

Brenda F. Kyle

Tom J. Walsh