



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

January 21, 2009

**AGENDA ITEM**

For Meeting of: 3-19-09

**MEMORANDUM**

To: The Commission

Through: Joseph F. Stoltz *JFS*  
Acting Staff Director

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Chief Communications Officer

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Subject: Electronic Distribution of FEC *Record*

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SECRETARIAT

The Information Division proposes that, beginning in July 2009, the FEC no longer print and mail copies of its monthly newsletter, the *Record*. Instead, the *Record* will continue to be made available each month on the FEC web site (<http://www.fec.gov/pages/record.shtml>), and the Information Division will notify all registered committees via a blast e-mail each time a new issue is posted. Individuals and organizations who are not registered with the Commission, but who would like to continue to receive the *Record*, can subscribe through FECMail (GovDelivery) and will automatically receive e-mail notification when a new issue is posted to the web site.

**Background**

As part of a broad effort to cut costs and improve efficiency by capitalizing on new technology, the Information Division has for several years been transitioning to the paperless distribution of many of its notices and publications. For example, in January 2007 the Division implemented a highly successful program to distribute Prior Notices of filing deadlines solely via e-mail and on the FEC web site. Paperless distribution has already allowed us to cut costs, improve efficiency, save resources and reduce the amount of storage space our division requires. In addition, Prior Notices sent via e-mail are received by committees almost instantaneously, ensuring timely notification.

We believe that paperless distribution of the *Record* represents the next logical step and will result in both a significant cost savings to the agency and an increase in the agency's responsiveness to the regulated community. Each year the Information Division produces 12 monthly issues of the *Record* and an annual *Record* index. The cost associated with printing and mailing an issue fluctuates each month depending on the size of the issue and the number of subscribers on the *Record* mailing list during the month. We generally print 14,000 to 15,000 copies each month. We estimate that it will cost \$39,000 to print the *Record* in FY 2009 and that mailing costs will exceed \$45,000.

As a periodical, the *Record* is especially suited to on-line publication. Unlike a Campaign Guide that users might keep on their desks as a comprehensive reference guide throughout the election cycle, the *Record* provides a timely update on the Commission's actions throughout the month. Even in its current printed form, the *Record* is not designed for long-term storage on a bookcase. Thus, moving to electronic distribution should only serve to capitalize on the *Record's* main strength—its timeliness—by prompting readers to view it electronically rather than waiting for the issue to be printed and mailed.

#### **Proposed Action**

Absent any objection from Commissioners, we would begin advising *Record* subscribers in the February 2009 issue (continuing for four months thereafter) of our plans to transition to e-mail delivery. The notice, printed in each issue of the *Record*, would inform subscribers that beginning with the July issue political committees will be sent an e-mail link to the web version of the *Record* each month. This e-mail will be sent to the address the committee provides on its Form 1, Statement of Organization. The notice will instruct other subscribers to sign up for automated FECMail notifications. In both cases, subscribers will receive an e-mail notification each month directing them to the online version of the latest edition of the *Record* available on the FEC web site. Subscribers can then choose to print the file or save it electronically for their records. The FEC also maintains on its web site an archive of *Record* issues dating back to 1996.

Beginning with the July 2009 issue, we will no longer print and mail copies of the *Record* to subscribers, except that we will print copies on demand and mail them to recipients who specifically request this service.

#### **Recommendation**

We recommend the Commission approve this plan to transition to electronic delivery of the agency's monthly *Record* newsletter.