



## Press Release

# The FCC's News Distortion Rules Highlight Need for Updates

PAULINA ENCK | OCTOBER 8, 2024

Former President Trump recently called for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to revoke the licenses owned by the American Broadcasting Company after alleging unfair treatment from the network's moderators during his debate against Vice President Harris. In a new insight, Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Jeffrey Westling walks through the rules regarding the FCC's capacity to engage in content-based regulation of television broadcasters, reviews First Amendment concerns for such authority, and considers reforms Congress could enact.

### Key points:

- Federal regulators do indeed have the authority to impose a variety of content-based rules on radio and television broadcasters and may revoke their licenses if broadcasters do not comply.
- Such restrictions do not, and constitutionally cannot, apply to newspapers, streaming services, websites, social media, and a wide variety of other sources, an asymmetry that is likely harmful to the overall media environment.
- Over the longer-term, Congress should consider legislative changes to allow broadcasters and alternative media sources to compete on a more level regulatory playing field.

[Read the analysis](#)