

FCC Makes Open Internet Comments More Accessible to Public

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It goes without saying that there has been tremendous interest in the FCC's Open Internet rulemaking. As of yesterday, over 1.1 million comments were filed in the docket, both through our Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) and our special openinternet@fcc.gov email address. We welcome and expect many more comments in the weeks to come. And to be clear, **every** comment will be reviewed as part of the official record of this proceeding.

Because of the sheer number of comments and the great public interest in what they say, Chairman Wheeler has asked the FCC IT team to make the comments [available](#) to the public today in a series of six [XML](#) files, totaling over 1.4 GB of data – approximately two and half times the amount of plain-text data embodied in the Encyclopedia Britannica. The release of the comments as [Open Data](#) in this machine-readable format will allow researchers, journalists and others to analyze and create visualizations of the data so that the public and the FCC can discuss and learn from the comments we've received. Our hope is that these analyses will contribute to an even more informed and useful reply comment period, which ends on September 10. We will make available additional XML files covering reply comments after that date.

A few other housekeeping matters: First, mailed comments postmarked prior to July 18 are still being scanned and entered into the ECFS and may not be reflected in the files. We will post an updated XML file when they are completed, so stay tuned. Second, certain handwritten comments may not be searchable. For this reason, source links to these comments are included in the files. Finally, we hope that whatever visualizations are developed using this open data will comply with the [standards](#) that allow use and access by differently-abled individuals. The Chairman and the FCC CIO are committed to ensuring accessible web content in multiple forms for all.

We recognize that not everyone may have the requisite technical skills to build visualizations and analyze raw XML data. (Members of the public will, of course, still have the option of reviewing and searching the record via ECFS). However, we're hoping that

those who do have the technical know-how will develop and share these tools for the public to use. Open Data is an important step towards greater transparency in public deliberations. We look forward to seeing and benefitting from the fruits of your efforts and welcome your ideas on how to make this data even more useful. With the start of the second round of comments, we encourage continued submission to the FCC of insights and perspectives about the first round of comments, either through the ECFS or via openinternet@fcc.gov.