



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

**STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN MATTHEW S. PETERSEN AND
COMMISSIONERS CAROLINE C. HUNTER AND LEE E. GOODMAN
ON THE TIMELY RESOLUTION OF ENFORCEMENT MATTERS**

In recent weeks, the Commission has engaged in a healthy discussion about how we can more efficiently process our enforcement docket. This dialogue is important because timely resolutions provide both closure to respondents and complainants and clarity and guidance to the public regarding the law's reach and meaning.

As commissioners our most important consideration when handling enforcement matters is reaching the right result. Federal campaign finance laws regulate in an area where fundamental free speech interests are at stake. Thus, we are obliged to remain diligent in ensuring our decisions do not cross defined constitutional boundaries and infringe upon protected speech activities. Our docket is, moreover, filled with cases that present complex, novel questions of law – questions that can only be answered after thorough and thoughtful review of the relevant record and careful consideration of the consequences of Commission action. We also must treat similarly situated respondents similarly to ensure due process of law. And when pending litigation will affect or answer legal questions pertinent to a pending enforcement matter or when different matters involve substantially the same legal issue or the same respondent, considerations of timing must also accommodate considerations of fairness and consistency.

Speed and soundness of result need not always be in tension, and in instances where they are not, the Commission should resolve such matters as expeditiously as possible. Toward this end, we support the Chair's proposal to add dates to the executive session calendar to further expedite the resolution of pending matters. We will also continue to seek ways to work with our colleagues and the Office of General Counsel to improve the Commission's processing of enforcement cases. Any such Commission initiative must be undertaken with an eye toward the principles articulated above. We look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues to achieve this result.