



FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20463

BEFORE THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

In the Matter of)
)

FOX News Network, LLC)

) MUR 6952
)
)

**STATEMENT OF REASONS
OF COMMISSIONER ELLEN L. WEINTRAUB**

FOX News hosted and broadcast two debates of Republican presidential candidates on August 6, 2015. On July 27, 2015, FOX News announced it was expanding participation in the debates to include 16 candidates, an action that served as the basis of the complaint in this matter.¹

FOX News was confronted with a difficult and fast-moving situation, and I believe they were trying to do the right thing. The field included an unanticipated number of viable candidates with only negligible room to differentiate among reasonable contenders. In the face of these difficulties, as FOX News noted, it sought to broaden rather than restrict participation in its debates, an event that was the subject of exceptional public interest.

In response to a motion to find reason to believe that FOX News violated the law, I voted No. In other words, when asked whether I believed FOX News broke the law, I said, "No."

In an attempt to find common ground and provide a clear statement to the public, I moved to dismiss the complaint and offered a brief analysis of the facts and law that I hoped

¹ The Complaint alleged that FOX News violated the Commission's regulations on staging candidate debates, 11 CFR § 110.13.

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MUR 6952 (FOX News)
Statement of Reasons

would be supported by a majority of Commissioners. The analysis I proposed concluded that the Commission should dismiss the allegations against FOX News, and emphasized that FOX News had acted appropriately. There was no interest among my colleagues in going forward with my dismissal proposal. I respect their decisions.

I am disappointed, however, that instead of seeking common ground, one of my colleagues seems intent on exaggerating disagreement among Commissioners. In an agency already renowned for its dysfunction, this is unhelpful. It does the American people a disservice.

6/30/16
Date

Ellen L. Weintraub
Ellen L. Weintraub
Commissioner