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From: Jack Barbash
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2009 3:30 PM
To: FN-OMB-OIRA-Submission
Subject: Some suggestions for facilitating public input on proposed policies

Greetings.

Thank you for your interest in public input on the process by which the Federal government obtains public input on its proposed policies.

In relation to President Obama's stated interest in suggestions regarding "encouraging public participation in agency regulatory processes" and "disclosure and transparency" in his recent Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies [74 FR 5977], I've often been frustrated by the difficulties I've encountered in providing such input in recent years. Indeed, the process of submitting comments on proposed policies online has often been so cumbersome as to give the impression that such input wasn't really wanted by the Federal government at all.

I would therefore like to make the following suggestions for EVERY proposed policy for which the Federal government seeks public input through the Worldwide Web:

(A) EVERY web page that invites public input for a given policy should provide (1) a simple series of bullets that summarize ALL of the major changes that the new policy would involve, and (2) either a CLEARLY MARKED link that brings potential respondents directly to a form on which they can enter their comments, or the specific email address to which such comments should be sent.

(B) Every such policy announcement should also include a date by which (and the URL for a website at which) all public comments in response to the proposed policy will be posted online.

Thank you for reading this, and best of luck with this process.

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