

# United States Senate

July 16, 2025

The Honorable Brendan Carr  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
45 L Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Carr,

Fox News's selective editing of a June 2024 interview with then-candidate Donald Trump appears to have misled viewers about his intentions regarding the release of files in the Jeffrey Epstein matter. Indeed, the selective editing of the Trump interview led viewers to believe that Trump unqualifiedly supported the files' release when in reality he equivocated. Yet, when CBS made editorial decisions around a *60 Minutes* interview with then-Vice President Kamala Harris in October 2024 that had no effect on its content, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) opened an inquiry. I decry this politically based double standard, but an investigation into Fox News is not the answer. Instead, I urge the Commission to end its partisan attacks on CBS and cease interfering with the judgment of independent news organizations.

Americans who watched *Fox & Friends* on June 2, 2024 — or saw or heard the interview rebroadcast on a Fox radio or TV affiliate — may have been surprised this past weekend when Trump discounted the importance of the Epstein files on Truth Social. In the aired footage of that June interview, when Trump was asked whether he would release the Epstein files, he responded: “Yeah, yeah I would.”<sup>1</sup> But right after those words — in a portion of the interview unaired on *Fox & Friends* — Trump hedged his answer: “I guess I would. I think that less so because, you don't know, you don't want to affect people's lives if it's phony stuff in there, because it's a lot of phony stuff with that whole world. But I think I would.” Asked if it would restore trust, he said, “Yeah. I don't know about Epstein so much as I do the others. Certainly about the way he died. It'd be interesting to find out what happened there, because that was a weird situation and the cameras didn't happen to be working, etc., etc. But yeah, I'd go a long way toward that one.”<sup>2</sup> When the full interview was released on a Fox News radio program, reporters picked up on this selective editing, suggesting that Fox News “massaged” the interview.<sup>3</sup> No wonder, then, many

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<sup>1</sup> Fox News, *Trump: 'My revenge will be success,'* YouTube (June 2, 2024), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I12BrDyu1n0&t>.

<sup>2</sup> Fox News, *EXCLUSIVE full interview with Former President Donald Trump! | Will Cain Show*, YouTube (June 3, 2024), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVKRNcQUbRY>.

<sup>3</sup> Max Tani, *How Fox News massaged a Trump interview*, Semafor (June 9, 2024), <https://www.semafor.com/article/06/09/2024/how-fox-news-massaged-a-trump-interview>.

Trump supporters were surprised this weekend when Trump told them they should “not waste Time and Energy on Jeffrey Epstein.”<sup>4</sup>

This selective editing appears to be far more misleading than the run-of-the-mill editorial decision-making in CBS’s interview with Harris last fall. In October 2024, CBS aired excerpts from an interview with Harris on its programs *60 Minutes* and *Face the Nation*. As the transcript of the interview — which you effectively forced CBS to release after months of public pressure — demonstrates, the excerpts aired on CBS were a quintessential example of editorial decision-making.<sup>5</sup> In stark contrast to Fox News’s handling of Trump’s interview, CBS’s edits did not alter the meaning of any of Harris’s answers. Yet, the FCC has opened a docket to accept comments on the Harris interview as a potential violation of the FCC’s little-used news distortion policy, an outrageous abuse of the Commission’s enforcement powers.<sup>6</sup>

That Fox News is a cable outlet, and therefore not subject to the FCC’s broadcast regulations, does not cabin the Commission’s role. Fox Corporation — the parent company of Fox News — also owns and operates dozens of licensed television and radio stations that are subject to FCC broadcast regulations. Any over-the-air rebroadcast of the edited interview by those broadcast licensees could bring Fox News’s editorial decision-making within the FCC’s jurisdiction. Given that the Commission, under your leadership, has determined that the Harris interview is worthy of the FCC’s time and attention, then surely the FCC should at least consider whether the Trump *Fox & Friends* interview — which appears to have actually misled viewers — aired on a broadcast station and investigate accordingly.

Better yet, the FCC should stop its partisan investigations into the news media and cease interfering with independent journalism altogether. To be clear, the FCC should not investigate or pressure either CBS or Fox. Editorial discretion lies at the heart of press freedom and should not be subject to government interference. Rather than opening an investigation into Fox, the FCC should close the docket in its investigation over the Harris interview on *60 Minutes* and stop wielding its regulatory power as a weapon against the news media.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

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<sup>4</sup> Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), Truth Social (July 12, 2025, 5:21 PM), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114842356238631061>.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Joe Lancaster, *Transcript Proves the 60 Minutes Scandal Was Always Fake*, Reason Magazine (Feb. 6, 2025), <https://reason.com/2025/02/06/transcript-proves-the-60-minutes-scandal-was-always-fake/>; Brian Stelter, *The FCC just published CBS’ raw Kamala Harris ‘60 Minutes’ interview*, CNN (Feb. 5, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/05/media/cbs-kamala-harris-60-minutes-interview/index.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Press Release, Federal Communications Commission, FCC Establishes MB Docket No. 25-73 and Comment Cycle for News Distortion Complaint Involving CBS Broadcasting Inc., Licensee of WCBS, New York, NY (Feb. 5, 2025), <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-25-107A1.pdf>.