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Public Comments on Request for Comment on Enforcement Process:=====

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Comment: I was very pleased to see the FEC is revamping its enforcement process. My suggestions are as follows.

1. Outside information should certainly be used in RTB and PC hearings. There are a number of sources that should be respected and relied upon in investigations, including FEC campaign finance reports, campaign-supported websites, public statements, and news articles. However, third party websites such as blogs should be viewed with skepticism, as they lend themselves to issues of slander and gossip.

2. Legal theories that led to new allegations not alleged in the original complaint should be investigated thoroughly. Investigations rarely go in the direction expected. However, if evidence becomes available that implicates a candidate/party/etc. of violating FECA, the FEC should not be impeded from investigation simply because the original complaint didn't discuss it. That being said, defendants have a right to know what they are being investigated of. There must be a limit as to how vast the investigation may be.

3. Settlements occur in 98% of civil cases in America. They occur often because parties do not have the time or money to try a case. The same can be said in FEC case. As such, settlements prior to probable cause hearings should be promoted by the FEC as an effective use of time and resources. I strongly support settling cases between the FEC and violators when possible. Additionally, I don't care if the financial damages in a settlement are in line with prior amounts. I think a timely settlement is more important and that moving forward after a finding of PC should be the emphasis.

4. Innumerable violators of FECA are first time, low level offenders who simply were not aware the effect of their actions. I strongly encourage the FEC to set a time limit shorter than five years on investigating complaints. First time offenders often have never run for office before, may have lost, and deserve the right to move on with their lives in a timely manner.