

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 12, 2013**

CONTACT:
Jamie Morris, 202-499-2425

Cause of Action Files Notice of Appeal to Challenge FTC's Vendetta to Shield Agency Records

FTC's decision could have a crippling effect on government transparency

WASHINGTON – [Cause of Action](#) (CoA), a government accountability organization, today appealed a United States District Court for the District of Columbia decision that upheld the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) denial of CoA's news media status with respect to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. CoA filed three separate FOIA requests to the FTC between 2011 and 2012 for documents pertaining to the agency's internet advertising guidelines on endorsements regarding social media authors and bloggers. The FTC repeatedly denied not just CoA's access to these documents, but also a public interest fee waiver as well as news media requestor status.

Cause of Action's Executive Director Dan Epstein commented on the potential chilling effects of the court's ruling:

"The current message from the court is that new media and nonprofit news organizations are treated differently than traditional media for purposes of qualifying for a waiver of fees. We are challenging this decision because we are dedicated to gaining access to information that will help us educate Americans about how their government uses taxpayer dollars, makes decisions, and claims authority. Cause of Action believes the court needs to review the facts of the case to fully understand the improper decision made by the FTC."

1. On May 25, 2012, CoA sued the FTC challenging the agency's improper denial of CoA's fee waiver and wrongful withholding of public documents.
2. On August 19, 2013, Judge Emmet G. Sullivan erroneously ruled that CoA (as a nonprofit government accountability and transparency organization) was not entitled to either a public interest fee waiver or news media requestor status, and in so doing effectively denied CoA access to important and relevant records with which to educate the public regarding a very important issue in social media.
3. On September 10, 2013 both parties filed a Joint Status Report and Recommendation, stating both parties reserved the right to appeal all issues.

CoA's Notice of Appeal can be found [here](#).

About Cause of Action:

Cause of Action is a non-profit, nonpartisan government accountability organization that fights to protect economic opportunity when federal regulations, spending and cronyism threaten it. For more information, visit www.causeofaction.org.

To schedule an interview with Cause of Action's Executive Director Dan Epstein, contact Mary Beth Hutchins, mary.beth.hutchins@causeofaction.org or Jamie Morris, jamie.morris@causeofaction.org.

###