

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 12:13 PM
To: 'slichter@gmu.edu'
Cc: 'hwang7@gmu.edu'; 'amundson@cempa.com'

Subject: **Your Scholarly, Authoritative Voice is Needed to Set the Record Straight -- The unfolding NPR, PBS, & CPB lawsuits against President Trump**

Attachments: [cja-6-27-25-ltr-to-doj.pdf](#)

TO: [Professor Robert Lichter](#) / [Founder & President -- The Center for Media and Public Affairs/ George Mason University](#)

This follows my phone call to the Center's office this morning (202-302-5523), answered by a recording indicating that the voice mail was full. Alas, from the Center's website it appears that that it may be inactive. In an event, I would greatly like to speak with you about your personal knowledge and scholarship pertaining to §396(g)(1)(A) of the Public Broadcasting Act requiring "strict adherence to objectivity and balance in all programs or series of programs of a controversial nature" – germane to my above-attached June 27th letter to the Justice Department about the NPR, PBS, and CPB lawsuits against President Trump – and the unconstitutionality of the Public Broadcasting Act "by reason of the corruption of CPB's 'internal governance and operations' and the absence of congressional oversight".

I learned of you only yesterday from the 1994 Yale Law & Policy Review article ["'Objectivity and Balance' in Public Broadcasting: Unwise, Unworkable, and Unconstitutional"](#) Vol. 12:184 (Steven D. Zansberg), which refers to your work in its footnote 9, stating:

"Senator Dole also referred to a report produced by the Center for Media and Public Affairs which had reviewed 225 PBS documentaries, finding that the documentaries 'lack ideological balance, and [that the] balance of opinion... consistently favored liberal positions.' *Id.* at S7430. *See generally* S. ROBERT LICHTER ET AL., CENTER FOR MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, BALANCE AND DIVERSITY OF PBS DOCUMENTARIES (1992)."

Then, earlier this morning, I discovered besmirching references to your work at pages 80-81 of Current's 2000 updating of CPB's self-serving 1987 so-called ["A History of Public Broadcasting"](#):

"...in March 1987, the [CPB] board had rejected board member Richard Brookhiser's proposal for a study of 'balance' by social scientists S. Robert Lichter and Linda S. Lichter, then at George Washington University. The Lichters did their study anyway, in 1988, and they released it in March 1992, when a CPB funding bill was pending in Congress. The content analysis, published by their Washington-Based Center for Media and Public Affairs, found that 225 public TV documentaries aired in a year 'tilted consistently in a liberal direction.'"

The documentaries, according to the Lichters, revealed a liberal agenda, which they said favored peace over war, preservation of the environment at the expense of human expansion, and absolute separation of church and state. South Africa's apartheid was 'condemned by two out of three sources,' the report complained, and the people filed defending apartheid 'tended to be so extreme as to lack credence within the American political structure.' The public TV programs also tended to claim that minorities and women still suffered from discrimination in America, and portrayed national enemies in a favorable light.

'This so-called study is clearly a political tract, not scientific fact,' responded Robert Ottenhoff, PBS executive vice president. 'It is motivated by the same political bias that it purports to study.' Although public broadcasters said the study focused on certain documentaries that were unrepresentative of the total PBS schedule, congressional leaders who shared the Lichters' viewpoint found it most helpful in the campaign against the system.

Encouraged by writings of the Lichters and [Heritage Foundation's Laurence] Jarvik, Congress put the issue of program balance back in CPB's lap. Since its beginning, CPB had been responsible for 'strict adherence to objectivity and balance,' but in a June 1992 amendment to CPB's authorizing law, Congress ordered the corporation to solicit public views on objectivity and balance in programming (and certain other desirable qualities); to review national programs and make grants to meet those criteria; and to report on the matter annually to the President and Congress. ..."

The History's "Timeline" (at p. 127) also includes you in 1992:

"...March: Robert and Linda Lichter release political content analysis of PBS documentaries. August 26: President Bush signs CPB reauthorization act with Senate amendment requiring CPB to monitor 'objectivity and balance' in programming."

Please call me, at your earliest convenience, after you have read the June 27th letter.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
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Subject: Assisting Your Defense of President Trump & U.S. Taxpayers in the NPR & PBS Lawsuits – & Your Cross-Motions for Summary Judgment, etc. (Civil Case #25-1674; Civil Case #25-1722)

**TO: U.S. Department of Justice
Assistant U.S. Attorney Carmen M. Banerjee**

Attached is my letter of today's date to assist you in defending President Trump & U.S. taxpayers in the NPR & PBS lawsuits – & in cross-moving for summary judgment, etc. (Civil Case #25-1674; Civil Case #25-1722). The cc's are to Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeremy Samuel Bloch Newman, defending against *CPB v. Trump* (Civil Case #25-1305), the Media Research Center (MRC), and the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis (CAMERA).

Please advise, as soon as possible – and no later than Friday, July 4th – so that I, MRC, and CAMERA may be guided accordingly.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
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