

Cary Coglianese, Stuart Shapiro, Steven J. Balla

*Unifying Rulemaking Information:
Recommendations for the New Federal Docket Management System*

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Abstract by Lisa Pettinati

The article discusses the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS), a product of e-rulemaking that will allow for the public to access all federal materials over the Internet. Recently, the authors drafted a letter to the Bush Administration to offer their insight into how to ensure the highest quality when implementing this system. The article highlights these recommendations, while also explaining the importance of enhancing the overall possibilities of e-rulemaking.

The article suggests that public access to rulemaking promotes the legitimacy of administrative law, highlighting Congressional intent to promote transparency with its adoption of the APA. The authors present the internet based system as a method for furthering this initiative. In addition, the FDMS will institute a uniform government-wide docket that any member of the public can search and download material. The article indicates that the electronic dockets will keep people informed so long as the system is useful, complete, consistent, and easy to find.

The first part of the article explains the current state of empirical research on rulemaking. The second part of the article identifies the developments leading up to the creation of e-rulemaking and details the Bush Administration's efforts to support FDMS. Lastly, the authors put forth their recommendations on implementing the most effective internet based system.