

July 15, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

50 State Broadcasters Associations Urge Relief for Local Media

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, Schumer and McCarthy,

The undersigned broadcaster associations representing local, over-the-air broadcast stations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico urge your consideration and passage of provisions to provide relief for local media in any upcoming appropriations bills and legislative measures aimed at addressing the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the outset of the pandemic, local media outlets have been providing critical and essential services to their communities – working around the clock to ensure that their viewers, readers and listeners remain informed, connected and safe. Unlike other businesses, who have had the option of temporarily closing their doors, local broadcasters and news publishers have maintained their operations, which have become more important than ever to their communities. However, advertising is the lifeblood of these local media outlets, and news publishers, radio and television broadcasters rely on this revenue to maintain their services. Some local broadcasters have seen advertising decline more than 50 percent compared to last year, and others have seen as much as 90 percent of their advertising buys cancelled. Local broadcasters alone may see revenue losses of more than \$14 billion this year, according to an industry analysis. Some local media outlets have been forced to furlough or eliminate their employees to remain open, and others have had to shutter their businesses permanently. As the pandemic marches on, many more will follow without relief.

We therefore urge Congress to consider and swiftly pass the following measures:

- **Ensure that local media can seek relief under the Paycheck Protection Program**

For many smaller broadcasters and news publishers, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) has provided the critical lifeline that has allowed them to continue serving their communities during the pandemic. Congress should be applauded for this program, which saved many local news outlets from closing their doors. Many of these still-struggling businesses desperately need additional relief, and we hope Congress will allow them to apply for additional funds under their

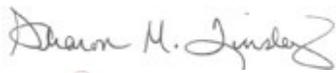
existing PPP loans. Many other local media and news organizations, however, have been unable to benefit from the program at all, simply because they exist within larger business or ownership groups. We therefore urge you to adopt the provisions contained in the Local News and Emergency Act (S.3718/H.R.6897), which were included in the House-passed HEROES Act, that would ensure that PPP eligibility is determined on a local, per station or newsroom basis.

- **Fund federal support for advertising**

The federal government can achieve important policy goals by providing direct and indirect support for advertising on local media, distributed across local media sectors and equitably allocated across large, medium and smaller communities. First, we urge you to include provisions in upcoming appropriations measures and COVID relief legislation that would direct U.S. government advertising campaigns to fund and prioritize local media for the promotion of important federal priorities (such as those promoting the Census, public health and public safety). Earlier this year, 240 members of the House of Representatives and 74 Senators publicly voiced their support for the prioritization of local media in federal advertising and sent letters to the Administration. Second, as local businesses around the country attempt to safely reopen and get back on their feet, any legislative efforts to provide economic stimulus to states, localities and businesses in upcoming COVID-19 relief legislation should include provisions that would prioritize and incentivize stimulus recipients to spend a portion of those funds on promotion through advertising on local media.

Local broadcasters in all 50 states remain committed to providing critical – and free – service to their local communities. We urge Congress to act swiftly to ensure that local radio and television broadcasters and local newspapers can continue to serve their vital roles in informing Americans and keeping them safe.

Respectfully,



Alabama Broadcasters Association
Sharon Tinsley



Alaska Broadcasters Association
Cathy Hiebert



Arizona Broadcasters Association
Christopher Kline

C. Luke Story



Arkansas Broadcasters Association
Luke Story

Joe Berry



California Broadcasters Association
Joe Berry

Justin Sasso



Colorado Broadcasters Association
Justin Sasso

Michael Patrick Ryan



Connecticut Broadcasters Association
Michael Patrick Ryan

C. Patrick Roberts



Florida Association of Broadcasters
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Bob Houghton



Georgia Association of Broadcasters
Bob Houghton

Jamie Hartnett



Hawaii Association of Broadcasters
Jamie Hartnett

Connie M. Searles



Idaho State Broadcasters Association
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Dennis Lyle



Illinois Broadcasters Association
Dennis Lyle

Dave Arland



Indiana Broadcasters Association
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Lisa Reynolds



Iowa Broadcasters Association
Lisa Reynolds

Allison Mazzei



Kansas Association of Broadcasters
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Chris Winkle



Kentucky Broadcasters Association
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Polly Prince Johnson



Louisiana Association of Broadcasters
Polly Prince Johnson

Suzanne Goucher



Maine Association of Broadcasters
Suzanne Goucher

Lisa Reynolds



MARYLAND DC DELAWARE BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION

Maryland/D.C./Delaware (MDCD) Broadcasters Association
Lisa Reynolds

Jordan Walton



Massachusetts Broadcasters Association
Jordan Walton

Karole L. White



Michigan Association of Broadcasters
Karole L. White

Wendy S. Paulson



Minnesota Broadcasters Association
Wendy Paulson

Amanda S. Fontaine



Mississippi Association of Broadcasters
Amanda Fontaine

Mark Gordon



Missouri Broadcasters Association
Mark Gordon

Dewey Bruce



Montana Broadcasters Association
Dewey Bruce

Jim Timm



Nebraska Broadcasters Association
Jim Timm

Mitch Fox



Nevada Broadcasters Association
Mitch Fox

Tracy Caruso



New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters
Tracy Caruso

Paul Rotella



New Jersey Broadcasters Association
Paul Rotella

Paula Maes



New Mexico Broadcasters Association
Paula Maes

David Donovan



New York State Broadcasters Association
David Donovan

Lisa Reynolds



North Carolina Association of Broadcasters
Lisa Reynolds

Beth Helfrich



North Dakota Broadcasters Association
Beth Helfrich

Christine Merritt



Ohio Association of Broadcasters
Christine Merritt

Vance Harrison



Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters
Vance Harrison

Bob Singer



Oregon Association of Broadcasters
Bob Singer

Joe Conti



Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters
Joe Conti

Felix A Bonnet



Radio Broadcasters Association of Puerto Rico
Felix Bonnet

Lori Needham



Rhode Island Broadcasters Association
Lori Needham

Margaret Wallace



South Carolina Broadcasters Association
Margaret Wallace

Steve Willard



South Dakota Broadcasters Association
Steve Willard

Chris Baker



Tennessee Association of Broadcasters
Tennessee Association of Broadcasters
Chris Baker

Oscar Rodriguez



Texas Association of Broadcasters
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Michele Zabriskie



Utah Broadcasters Association
Michele Zabriskie

Wendy Mays



Vermont Association of Broadcasters
Wendy Mays

Doug Easter



Virginia Association of Broadcasters
Doug Easter

Keith Shipman



Washington State Association of Broadcasters
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Michele Crist



West Virginia Broadcasters Association
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Michelle Vetterkind



Wisconsin Broadcasters Association
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Laura Grott



Wyoming Association of Broadcasters
Laura Grott