

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

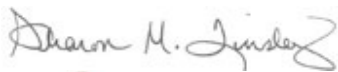
existing PPP loans. Many other local media and news organizations, however, have been unable to benefit from the program at all, simply because they exist within larger business or ownership groups. We therefore urge you to adopt the provisions contained in the Local News and Emergency Act (S.3718/H.R.6897), 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.

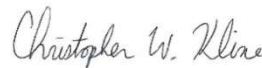
Respectfully,



**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**  
C. Patrick Roberts

*Bob Houghton*



**Georgia Association of Broadcasters**  
Bob Houghton

*Jamie Hartnett*



**Hawaii Association of Broadcasters**  
Jamie Hartnett

*Connie M. Searles*



**Idaho State Broadcasters Association**  
Connie Searles

*Dennis Lyle*



**Illinois Broadcasters Association**  
Dennis Lyle

*Dave Arland*



**Indiana Broadcasters Association**  
Dave Arland

*Lisa Reynolds*



**Iowa Broadcasters Association**  
Lisa Reynolds

*Allison Mazzei*



**Kansas Association of Broadcasters**  
Allison Mazzei

*Chris Winkle*



**Kentucky Broadcasters Association**  
Chris Winkle

*Polly Prince Johnson*



**Louisiana Association of Broadcasters**  
Polly Prince Johnson

*Suzanne Goucher*



**Maine Association of Broadcasters**  
Suzanne Goucher

*Lisa Reynolds*



**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**  
Chris Baker

Oscar Rodriguez



**Texas Association of Broadcasters**  
Oscar Rodriguez

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**  
Keith Shipman

Michele Crist



**West Virginia Broadcasters Association**  
Michele Crist

Michelle Vetterkind



**Wisconsin Broadcasters Association**  
Michelle Vetterkind

Laura Grott



**Wyoming Association of Broadcasters**  
Laura Grott