

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 4, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Majority Leader Thune,

Federal investment in the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) supports over 1,500 local and regional public television and radio stations that provide free, high-quality programming to millions of households across the country. Following the White House's request to rescind \$1.07 billion in federal funding for CPB, we write to express our strong opposition to any rescission of funding for public broadcasting and prohibitions of direct and indirect funding to the Public Broadcasting Service and National Public Radio, as outlined in the Executive Order titled, "Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Biased Media" released on May 1, 2025. This funding is essential to the functioning of the public media system and the communities they serve, and any cuts in funding would have detrimental effects on local stations, which rely on this funding to provide critical services to millions of Americans across the country.

Our public broadcasting system is a unique American institution that is deeply embedded in our communities and a critical source of lifesaving public safety services, accurate information, and educational programming. The vast majority of the federal funding CPB receives is allocated to local radio and television stations across the country. These cuts will have an immediate and significant impact for stations in rural communities that heavily rely on CPB funding to provide critical services and could likely result in the elimination of programming or outright closure of stations in areas already faced with limited connectivity.

According to Northwestern University, 55 million people in the United States have no or only one source of local news, and rural counties are far more likely to lose their local news outlets.¹ This number could increase if the two-year advance appropriation for public media is not upheld, resulting in the drastic reduction or complete elimination of free, high-quality local programming. This is especially concerning given the importance of public broadcasting during public emergencies, such as natural disasters, transportation accidents, national security threats, or public safety matters. CPB funds are essential to ensuring that the broadcast infrastructure remains robust and operational in disaster situations, especially scenarios in which local public

¹ ^[1] <https://www.medill.northwestern.edu/news/2024/medill-report-shows-local-news-deserts-expanding.html>

broadcasters serve as the only source of information for those who need a lifeline. Any cuts in funding will have drastic consequences for communities in need.

And there is much more to their public safety services in addition to the critical local information they broadcast. Public television's interconnection technology, which connects local public television stations to PBS, is also one of the backbone pathways for the delivery of our nation's Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) services – enabling cell phone subscribers to receive geotargeted emergency text alerts no matter where they are in the country. A cut to public broadcasting funding would put this lifesaving service and its nationwide footprint at risk.

Public television has also pioneered cutting edge technology that helps first responders communicate with each other over the broadcast spectrum without the need for mobile service or broadband. This datacasting technology and public television's public safety partnerships is already helping with early earthquake warning and has been proven effective in a wide range of scenarios where broadband or cellular service are limited, including rural search and rescue, overwater communications, large event crowd control and more. But this is only possible if stations serving rural and remote areas with limited broadband are healthy and continue operating as they are today.

On the education front, public television's early childhood education services ensure that every family has access to high-quality, non-commercial educational content regardless of their ability to pay for such services. This is essential for over 50 percent of three and four-year old children who do not attend formal preschool.

If funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) is eliminated or rescinded, the impact would be devastating. Millions of people across the country whose stations rely on CPB funding for a significant percentage of their budget would be at risk of losing access to public television's services. These are services that nobody else in the media world is providing, but it's exactly the work for which public broadcasting was created, and they are delivering to our communities every day.

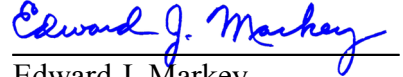
Public broadcasting is an essential service that should be protected, not decimated. For this reason, we request that you prioritize maintaining and continuing funding for CPB.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



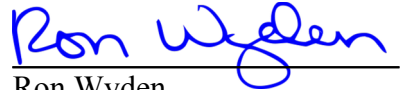
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



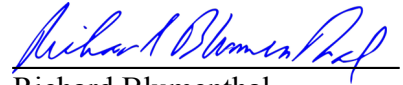
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



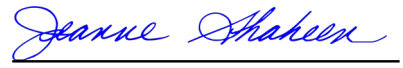
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



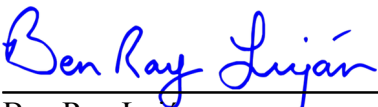
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



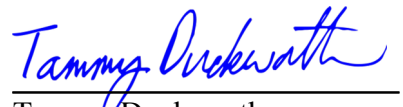
Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator




Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



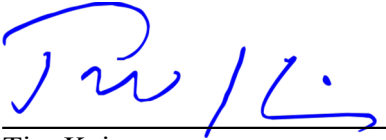
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Kaine", positioned above a horizontal line.

Tim Kaine

United States Senator