

May 30, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

50 State Broadcasters Associations, Including the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, In Support of the Reinstatement of the Diversity Tax Certificate Program

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leaders Schumer, McConnell and Jeffries:

On behalf of the undersigned broadcasters associations representing local, over-the-air broadcast stations in all 50 states, including the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, we write today to ask that you support and consider swift passage of H.R. 8072 and S. 4158, the Broadcast VOICES Act introduced by Rep. Steven Horsford (D-NV-04) and Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI). This piece of legislation reinstates the tax certificate program at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that would encourage investment in TV and radio broadcast station ownership for women and people of color.

From 1978 to 1995, the Minority Tax Certificate program established at the FCC provided a tax incentive to individuals who sold their majority interest in a broadcast station to people of color. During that time, TV and radio broadcast station ownership by people of color increased by more 550 percent. Fast forward to 2024, diverse ownership in our industry has drastically changed not due to lack of effort or interest, but due to lack of access to capital. Currently, women make up less than 6 percent of broadcast TV station owners and people of color make up less than 3 percent. When it comes to broadcast radio station owners, women make up around 7 percent of owners and people of color make up less than 3 percent.

Broadcasters provide an invaluable resource to all communities, serving as a local and trusted source for news and information across the country. Our strength is in our ability to cover diverse community experiences and tell stories from an authentic perspective. The tax certificate program will help us build a local media landscape that reflects our communities on the air, both in the control booth and boardroom. Additionally, the Broadcast VOICES Act will help with building a pipeline for a new generation of broadcast station owners that is inclusive of women, people of color and other underrepresented individuals. We therefore urge Congress to act swiftly and pass H.R. 8072 and S. 4158 to make sure that all voices are accurately represented in the broadcasting industry.

Respectfully,









