

June 3, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

We are writing to express strong and unified opposition to H.R. 848, legislation that was voted out of the House Judiciary Committee by Chairman Conyers on Wednesday, May 13, 2009. H.R. 848 seeks to further burden the radio broadcast industry by requiring local radio to bear additional costs for the music which radio promotes and plays for free to the public.

We would also like to highlight that there is strong House opposition to the legislative effects of H.R. 848. H.Con.Res. 49, the Local Radio Freedom Act, introduced by Congressman Gene Green, is currently supported by over 218 bipartisan members of the U.S. House. Support for this resolution continues to increase on a weekly basis. The members signed on to H.Con.Res. 49 have expressed their opposition to the imposition of any new performance fee on local radio.

For more than 80 years, Congress has recognized the symbiotic relationship between local radio and the recording industry. The public outcry and recent controversy surrounding the mark up of H.R. 848 reflects the foreseeable negative consequences of the bill and the devastating impact it will have on local radio and the communities served with the delivery of emergency information, national defense information, news, weather, traffic, public service information and quality entertainment, including the introduction of new local and regional artists to the public.

The impact of H.R. 848 would also be hitting the radio broadcast industry in the midst of the terrible economic climate. America's radio broadcasters already pay half a billion dollars annually to composers and music publishers through ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC. Mandating additional payments that will most directly benefit the record labels puts Congress in the position of siphoning off of hundreds of millions of dollars from local radio markets throughout America and sending most of those dollars overseas where the majority of record labels are headquartered. The Judiciary Committee is in the process of asking the GAO to study the impact of the bill on small, religious and minority-owned stations whose existence and future growth would be devastated under H.R. 848. Moving the bill before that study has been completed, made public and is evaluated would place the cart before the horse.

Please help ensure that radio remains a viable voice and that H.R. 848 is not sent to the House floor for a vote. We sincerely hope that you will take our concerns into consideration and we look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

America's 50 Independent State Broadcasters Associations

Sharon M. Tinsley



Alabama Broadcasters Association
Sharon Tinsley

Michael C. Rice



Connecticut Broadcasters Association
Mike Rice

Linda Compton



Indiana Broadcasters Association
Linda Compton

Darlene Simono



Alaska Broadcasters Association
Darlene Simono

Pat Roberts



Florida Association of Broadcasters
Pat Roberts

Sue Toma



Iowa Broadcasters Association
Sue Toma

Art Brooks



Arizona Broadcasters Association
Art Brooks

Jere Pigue



Georgia Association of Broadcasters
Jere Pigue

Kent Cornish



Kansas Association of Broadcasters
Kent Cornish

Jim McCall



Arkansas Broadcasters Association
Jim McCall

Stephanie Uyeda



Hawaii Association of Broadcasters
Stephanie Uyeda

Gary R. White



Kentucky Broadcasters Association
Gary White

Stan Statham



California Broadcasters Association
Stan Statham

Connie M. Searles



Idaho State Broadcasters Association
Connie Searles

Lou Munson



Louisiana Association of Broadcasters
Lou Munson

Marilyn C. Hogan



Colorado Broadcasters Association
Marilyn Hogan

Dennis Lyle



Illinois Broadcasters Association
Dennis Lyle

Suzanne Goucher



Maine Association of Broadcasters
Suzanne Goucher



Maryland/D.C./Delaware (MDCD) Broadcasters Association
Chip Weinman



Missouri Broadcasters Association
Donald Hicks



New Jersey Broadcasters Association
Paul Rotella

Deanna Raymond



Massachusetts Broadcasters Association
Deanna Raymond

Greg MacDonald



Montana Broadcasters Association
Greg MacDonald

Paula Maes



New Mexico Broadcasters Association
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Karole L. White



Michigan Association of Broadcasters
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Marty Riemenschneider



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Joe Reilly



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Jim du Bois



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Doug F. Easter



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Vance Harrison



Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters
Vance Harrison

Steve Willard



South Dakota Broadcasters Association
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Mark Allen



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Bill Johnstone



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Whit Adamson



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West Virginia Broadcasters Association
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Dale Zabriskie



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Laura Grott



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Lori Needham



Rhode Island Broadcasters Association
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Jim Condon



Vermont Association of Broadcasters
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