

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 2, 2022

Dear Colleague:

We urge you to join 27 of your Senate colleagues by cosponsoring the bipartisan Local Radio Freedom Act (S.Con.Res.9). Through cosponsoring this resolution, you would show your support for the important local news, reporting and public safety functions that free, local radio stations in your state provide to your constituents.

For nearly two decades, a broad group of bipartisan Senators have cosponsored the Local Radio Freedom Act, recognizing that radio provides an essential service to the American people and that imposing new fees or taxes on local, free, broadcast radio would jeopardize those services. Radio stations rely almost exclusively on advertising revenue to fund their operations. This includes local payrolls supporting on-air talent, news producers, writers and reporters, and promotions and sales staff; local real estate and transmission facilities; costs for emergency preparedness and severe weather resiliency capabilities; and, of course, music, sports and other programming Americans trust and rely on.

As we have seen in our own states, local radio stations often are the only source of local news and information after a severe weather event and can serve as a lifeline to those who have lost all power, cell service and access to the internet. With their 270 million listeners, local radio stations are also the most effective means to alert people nationwide during national emergencies. Indeed, FEMA's nationwide public safety and national security communications infrastructure relies heavily on the resilient backbone of local radio stations, which can continue to disseminate critical information even when the power is out, and when cellular, cable, and broadband networks are down. Through the Local Radio Freedom Act, the Senate reaffirms its long-held support for maintaining well-resourced, financially stable local radio stations so that they can continue to be the local, trustworthy, and timely First Informers upon which our constituents rely.

During weather emergencies, local radio stations dedicate precious resources to help their listeners – their neighbors and our constituents – prepare, stay safe, and rebuild. Imposing additional fees and royalties on these local radio stations would cut deeply into the very resources these stations depend on to protect our constituents in emergencies. Further, such fees will contribute to upending the mutually beneficial economic relationship that has existed for nearly a century, whereby artists and record labels receive valuable free promotion of their music through free airplay on local radio stations.

To support this important resolution, please contact Dylan Rogers, Dylan_Rogers@barrasso.senate.gov in Senator Barrasso's office, or Rachel Lentz, Rachel_Lentz@heinrich.senate.gov in Senator Heinrich's office. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator



JOHN BARRASSO
United States Senator