August 15, 2022

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

Given the important role that television and radio broadcasters play in delivering lifesaving news and public affairs programming to their local communities, we are concerned about the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposal to increase broadcasters’ regulatory fees by an astonishing 13 percent this year.

A 13 percent regulatory fee increase on television and radio broadcasters is disproportionate to the FCC’s 2 percent budget increase and to the proposed fee adjustments on other FCC supervised entities, some of whose regulatory fees are decreasing. While the FCC acknowledges that its regulatory fees per industry are based on the number of full-time equivalent employees staffed to a particular bureau, the statute requires the FCC to adjust the schedule of regulatory fees to take into account factors that are reasonably related to the benefits provided to the fee payor.

Broadcasters provide a free service to the public and are unable to pass these costs on to their audience. Instead, these fees must come out of operational budgets funded by advertising revenues that have not yet recovered from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. As a result, any substantial increase the FCC has proposed will have direct impacts on broadcasters’ ability to invest in programming or equipment broadcasters require to provide quality local news and information to their communities. For small broadcasters already operating on shoestring budgets, unjustified fee increases can affect whether they are able to cover certain events or, in some cases, stay on the air.

Considering the harm a substantial fee increase would bring, we would like to better understand the FCC’s proposal. To that end, we ask you to respond to the following questions as soon as possible:

- Given the FCC’s statutory responsibility to adjust its schedule of regulatory fees to take into account factors that are reasonably related to the benefits provided to the fee payor, could the FCC explain what additional benefits have been provided to broadcasters that would justify such a high fee increase?
- Did the Commission consider the inability of many broadcasters to pass along costs to their audiences?
• Why does the Commission’s proposed overall fee increase for broadcasters far exceed fee increases for any other industry?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to continuing to work together to support the essential work that broadcasters perform for their local communities.

Sincerely,

Tom Emmer  
Member of Congress

David Scott  
Member of Congress

Jeff Duncan  
Member of Congress

Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress

Ralph Norman  
Member of Congress

Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress

Randy Feenstra  
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress

Glenn Grothman  
Member of Congress

Mike Johnson  
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress

Roger Williams  
Member of Congress

Neal P. Dunn, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Chip Roy  
Member of Congress
David Rouzer
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson
Member of Congress

Liz Cheney
Member of Congress

David P. Joyce
Member of Congress

Ken Buck
Member of Congress

Yvette Herrell
Member of Congress

Tom Tiffany
Member of Congress

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

Markwayne Mullin
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Alex X. Mooney
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Bryan Steil
Member of Congress

Scott Fitzgerald
Member of Congress

Julia Letlow
Member of Congress

Barry Moore
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Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress

Carol D. Miller
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Mike Flood
Member of Congress

Donald J. Bacon
Member of Congress
Jim Jordan
Member of Congress

Mark Amodei
Member of Congress

Larry Bucshon, M.D.
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Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Darin LaHood
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Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress

Rodney Davis
Member of Congress

Steve Womack
Member of Congress

William Timmons
Member of Congress

John Moolenaar
Member of Congress

Bob Good
Member of Congress

Garret Graves
Member of Congress

Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress

Eric A. “Rick” Crawford
Member of Congress

Chris Stewart
Member of Congress

David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress

Tracey Mann
Member of Congress
Ron Kind  
Member of Congress

Jared Golden  
Member of Congress

Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen  
Member of Congress

Jeff Van Drew  
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Richard Hudson  
Member of Congress

Fred Keller  
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Jake LaTurner  
Member of Congress

Blake D. Moore  
Member of Congress

Jody Hice  
Member of Congress

Lauren Boebert  
Member of Congress

Jared Golden  
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Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen  
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Gary Palmer  
Chairman, Republican Policy Committee

Clay Higgins  
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Tom McClintock  
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Mark E. Green, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Mike Rogers  
Member of Congress
Bill Long  
Member of Congress

Michelle Steel  
Member of Congress

Jerry Carl  
Member of Congress

Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress

Deborah K. Ross  
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Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.  
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Mo Brooks  
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Michael Guest  
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Virginia Foxx  
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Tim Ryan  
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Michelle Fischbach
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Robert J. Wittman
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Mike Carey
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Dusty Johnson
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