

April 23, 2020

Russell T. Vought
Acting Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Vought,

We are writing today concerning the challenges faced by local media and actions the Office of Management and Budget can take that will help ensure these important businesses are able to continue to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Our radio and television broadcasters and rural newspapers provide local and national news, emergency alerts, educational programs, and more to all corners of the United States. In many rural areas, broadcast stations are the predominant or only form of local information. It is important that local media are able to continue to provide their services during the COVID-19 pandemic so that Americans are able to stay up to date with the latest news and information.

Local newspapers and broadcasters have been particularly hit hard financially due to decreased revenue typically derived from advertising sales. This comes at a time when they have increased coverage of daily news, alerts and educational programs. As Congress and the administration continue to work to keep small businesses operating and employees on the payroll through the Paycheck Protection Program, we believe there is an opportunity for the federal government to provide relief to our local newspapers and broadcasters.

Many federal agencies maintain advertising accounts in order to provide public notices and information to Americans. For example, the Census Bureau receives funding to run advertisements regarding the 2020 Census. With the passage of new programs under the CARES Act and other COVID-19 related legislation, there is an opportunity for the federal government to disseminate essential information to Americans through local advertisements. Further, allowing for flexibility for state and local governments to use federal funds to publicize new programs and information to their residents would serve a vital, dual interest. Increasing local advertising will both help disseminate important information to communities and support local media with revenue that will help keep them operating. This action can be implemented today, without the need for additional federal appropriations from Congress.

We strongly believe that local newspapers and broadcasters play an integral role during the COVID-19 pandemic and making sure that stations are able to continue operating during this time is critical. We therefore encourage the Office of Management and Budget to work with federal agencies throughout the government to increase advertising in local newspapers and on broadcast stations in order to help ensure they are able to continue to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

We thank you for your attention to this important issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator




JOE MANCHIN III
United States Senator



JOHN BARRASSO, M.D.
United States Senator



GARY PETERS
United States Senator



THOM TILLIS
United States Senator



CHARLES E. SCHUMER
United States Senator



JOHN BOOZMAN
United States Senator



EDWARD J. MARKEY
United States Senator



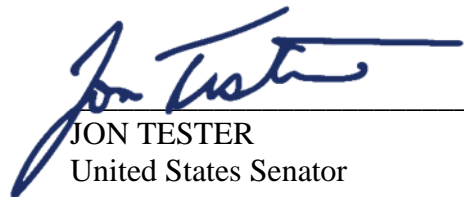
MIKE CRAPO
United States Senator



CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO
United States Senator



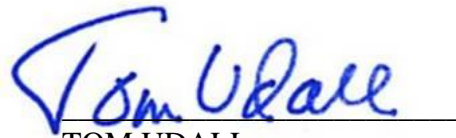
JONI K. ERNST
United States Senator



JON TESTER
United States Senator



JAMES M. INHOFE
United States Senator



TOM UDALL
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



DOUG JONES
United States Senator



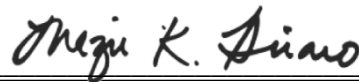
JOHN THUNE
United States Senator



KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator



JERRY MORAN
United States Senator




MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator



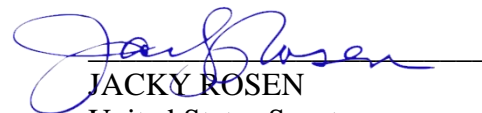
ROB PORTMAN
United States Senator



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



M. MICHAEL ROUNDS
United States Senator



JACKY ROSEN
United States Senator



TODD YOUNG
United States Senator



TINA SMITH
United States Senator



SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO
United States Senator



MARGARET WOOD HASSAN
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



KEVIN CRAMER
United States Senator

/s/Cory A. Booker

CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



PAT ROBERTS
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN
United States Senator



JOHN HOEVEN
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.

ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

BILL CASSIDY, M.D.
United States Senator

Michael F. Bennet

MICHAEL BENNET
United States Senator



RICHARD BURR
United States Senator

/s/Sherrod Brown

SHERROD BROWN
United States Senator

Roy Blunt

ROY BLUNT
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin

TAMMY BALDWIN
United States Senator

Chuck Grassley

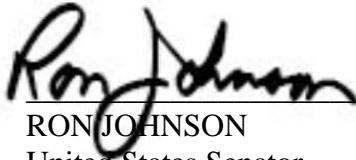
CHARLES GRASSLEY
United States Senator

/s/Martin Heinrich

MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



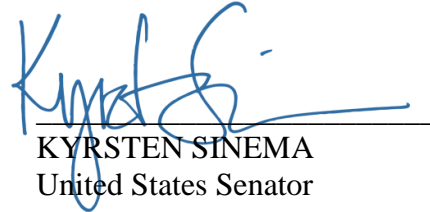
RON JOHNSON
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator



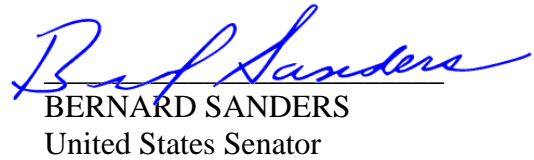
CINDY HYDE SMITH
United States Senator



KYRSTEN SINEMA
United States Senator



LISA MURKOWSKI
United States Senator



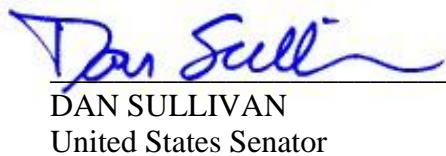
BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator



MIKE BRAUN
United States Senator



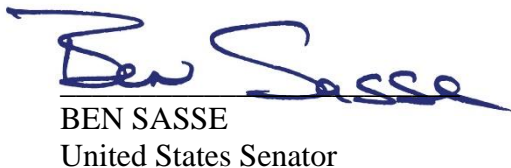
JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senator



DAN SULLIVAN
United States Senator



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



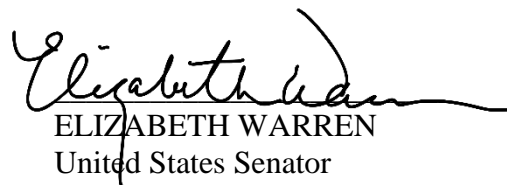
BEN SASSE
United States Senator



MARIA CANTWELL
United States Senator



KELLY LOEFFLER
United States Senator



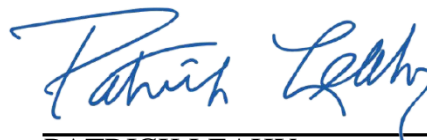
ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



LINDSEY O. GRAHAM
United States Senator



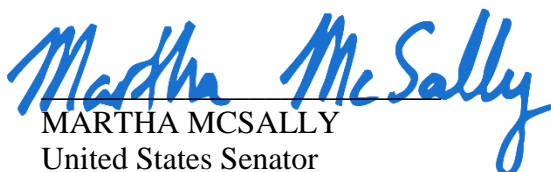
PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



TED CRUZ
United States Senator



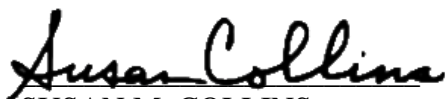
RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator



MARTHA MCSALLY
United States Senator



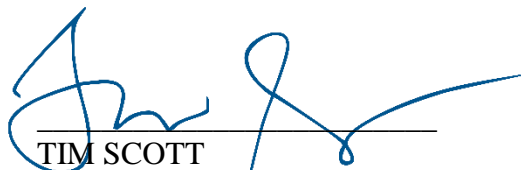
BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



SUSAN M. COLLINS
United States Senator

/s/Robert P. Casey, Jr.

ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr.
United States Senator



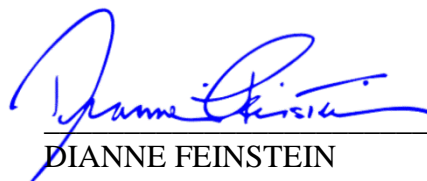
TIM SCOTT
United States Senator



DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator



MITT ROMNEY
United States Senator



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

/s/Jack Reed

JACK REED
United States Senator



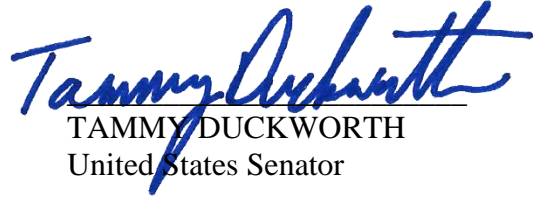
KAMALA HARRIS
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510



JEFFREY A. MERKLEY
United States Senator



TAMMY DUCKWORTH
United States Senator

/s/Thomas R. Carper
THOMAS R. CARPER
United States Senator

/s/Chris Van Hollen
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
United States Senator