Retain the Public’s Access to Programming Delivered Through Unique Spectrum Bands

The issue:
In addition to their primary spectrum (or airwaves) assignments for over-the-air transmissions, TV and radio broadcasters use additional spectrum in both the C-band and the 6 GHz band every day to transmit and receive critical, live content for their broadcasts. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is considering changes to the use of these spectrum bands to allow for new services, which could impact national programming listeners and viewers rely upon.

Here’s why:
The C-band is used for satellite communications, helping to deliver many of the national and syndicated shows you watch and hear every day. In addition to TV and radio broadcasters, it is also relied upon by cable and satellite providers, as well as over-the-top video providers. Those who use this spectrum have invested billions of dollars to launch satellites and build stations on the ground to receive and disseminate critical content to consumers, such as weather information, network news and entertainment and syndicated programs for radio and TV. This spectrum has unique characteristics that are impossible to replicate by other services. Additionally, it’s extremely sensitive to interference, so great care and technical consideration must be given before allowing new services to operate in this band of spectrum. The 6 GHz band is utilized by broadcasters for critical electronic newsgathering systems. This includes transmitting from portable cameras during coverage of live news, major sporting events and emergencies to a news truck, as well as transmission from the news truck to a central receiver or news studio. Permitting new, unlicensed use in the 6 GHz band presents significant coordination challenges and interference concerns for this type of live and mobile coverage that broadcast audiences rely on to get breaking news and emergency information.

The bottom line:
As the FCC moves forward to allow new uses of C-band and 6 GHz spectrum, Congress and the FCC must ensure that any changes protect existing users and their listeners and viewers from harmful interference or loss of service entirely. Broadcasters ask that implementation of the FCC’s orders be carefully monitored to ensure that existing uses in these spectrum bands are protected, particularly given the lack of meaningful alternatives and the unique technical properties of this spectrum.