

July 13, 2007

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel:

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and its member stations and networks urge you to hold a hearing to explore ways to increase diversity and the representation of minority groups and women in the communications industry. We have been concerned for some time that various barriers to entry have discouraged participation by such groups. We believe the time is ripe for Congress to take action, in particular by providing tax incentives to those selling broadcast stations to members of minority groups and women.

NAB and its education foundation administer or finance an array of programs, including leadership training, career fairs, and fellowship, mentoring and sales programs, designed to promote diversity at all levels of the broadcast industry – employment, management and ownership. But even with these successful industry initiatives, more can be done. For that reason, NAB strongly supports the reinstatement of a tax incentive program that would provide companies tax credits or other benefits if they sell broadcast properties to minorities or women. We have previously endorsed legislation aimed at that goal.

The Federal Communications Commission's previous tax certificate program was an effective policy in promoting minority ownership of broadcast stations. Congressional reinstatement of a similar program should also prove to be successful and, in the opinion of many including the FCC Advisory Committee on Diversity for Communications in the Digital Age, would be one of the most direct and effective methods of encouraging minority ownership in broadcasting. We note that Congressman Bobby Rush of Illinois has already introduced tax incentive legislation in this Congress.

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Accordingly, NAB urges you to hold a hearing in the near future to explore ways to increase diversity in the communications industry, especially by passing tax incentive legislation. Please let me know what NAB can do to assist the committee in its consideration of these matters.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David K. Rehr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David K. Rehr