

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2018

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Graves
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Frelinghuysen and Graves and Ranking Members Lowey and Quigley:

As you consider the upcoming FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bill, we request that you include funding to reimburse radio stations for any unintended and unavoidable costs they are likely to incur as a result of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) TV Incentive Auction "repack."

In 2012, Congress directed (P.L. 112-96) the FCC to conduct an auction to make broadcast television spectrum available for wireless companies to expand and improve their wireless broadband services. In addition to compensating those TV broadcasters participating in the auction, Congress appropriately determined that any TV broadcasters whose operations would be adversely impacted by this transfer of spectrum—through a complex frequency-shifting process known as the "repack"—should be reimbursed for their costs.

Unfortunately, the repack may have an unintended yet significant impact on the hundreds of radio stations that have transmitters co-located on TV towers. These stations, to accommodate the work necessary to accomplish the repack, must shift, cease or dramatically scale back their stations' operations while tower crews carry out the necessary work on impacted TV transmitters. This is essential to ensure the health and safety of tower workers. In many cases, this tower work—even under a "best case" scenario—will take weeks or even months to complete. Potential shortages of tower crews, inclement weather, and delayed equipment shipments could add additional time. This means weeks and months of radio listeners losing reliable access to their favorite local radio stations, including potentially during times of emergency.

Broadcast radio is a time-tested and reliable source of local news, community information, weather and traffic, as well as music and sports, for millions of Americans. As we have seen recently, in times of emergency, be it hurricanes, tornadoes, fires or terrorism, local radio literally serves as a lifeline for communities.

This requested appropriation is in alignment with authorization language in H.R. 4986, *the RAY BAUM'S Act*, which specifically authorizes funds for the repack. On February 14th, H.R. 4986 passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee by voice with bipartisan support. This bill directs that a Radio Broadcast Station Relocation fund be established to make funds available for the FCC to reimburse costs reasonably incurred by stations as a result of the repack. Additionally, the National Association of Broadcasters estimates the financial impact of the repack on radio stations at approximately \$50 million. As the Appropriations Committee prepares the FY 2018 omnibus bill for consideration in the House, we respectfully request that funding be made available for radio broadcasting stations with the on-going repack.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

With great respect,



Bill Flores
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress