

June 5, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
The Capitol, Room H-232  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
The Capitol, Room H-204  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
The Capitol, Room S-221  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
The Capitol, Room S-230  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the undersigned associations, we write to express our deep concern with the decision by some automakers to remove AM radio from their vehicles and to urge you to support legislation to include AM radio reception as a federal safety standard for all vehicles sold in the United States. Specifically, the AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act (H.R. 3413 / S. 1669) would direct federal automotive safety regulators to require automakers to maintain AM broadcast radio in their new vehicles at no additional charge to consumers, as a safety feature critical to ensuring that Americans can tune in to authoritative emergency information and updates.

As emergency managers working to maintain the nation's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all emergencies, disasters and threats to our nations' national security, AM radio is an essential tool to effectively disseminating local, timely and crucial information to the public. When extreme weather events occur and broadband, electric power and cell service are out, people with AM radios can continue to receive critical, and possibly lifesaving, information. Unlike other services, AM broadcasts are unique in terms of their resiliency and reach, including to areas that may not be served fully, if at all, by cell and/or broadband service. Of particular concern to us is the fact that removing free broadcast AM radio from certain vehicles effectively dismantles the Federal Emergency Management Agency's system for ensuring the President can reach all Americans in the event of a public safety or national security emergency.

We were heartened by the recent announcement by the Ford Motor Company that – now recognizing the important role AM radio plays in our Nation's public safety infrastructure – it will continue to include AM in all of its 2024 model vehicles. However, while this was a step in the right direction, it is imperative that no American be overlooked when it comes to public safety, and that all vehicles in the U.S. be required to include AM radio as a standard, free, safety feature. We stand united in expressing our support for maintaining AM radio in automobiles, and we respectfully request that you support this important legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Big City Emergency Managers  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists  
International Association of Emergency Managers  
International Association of Fire Chiefs  
National Association of Counties  
National Emergency Management Association

cc:

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation  
The Honorable Ted Cruz, Ranking Member, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation  
The Honorable Gary Peters, Chair, Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs  
The Honorable Rand Paul, Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs  
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair, Committee on Energy and Commerce  
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce  
The Honorable Mark Green, Chair, Committee on Homeland Security  
The Honorable Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security  
The Honorable Sam Graves, Chair, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure