



February 17, 2023

Dear Member of Congress,

Thank you for the work you are doing in service to our Nation.

I write today on behalf of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) association to ask that you consider adding your support to a resolution of key importance to our industry, the Local Radio Freedom Act (H.Con.Res.13). NRB is an association of Christian communicators whose membership reaches millions of listeners, viewers, and readers, and includes numerous local radio stations that play music in their programming day. These stations may well face unwarranted and financially damaging royalty fees absent adoption of the Local Radio Freedom Act (LRFA).

Local radio stations—particularly in times of emergency—provide a crucial public service that is burdened by the application of additional taxes, laws, and regulations. Broadcasters already pay music licensing fees and provide free promotion to record labels and artists, and local radio abides by many costly regulations that do not apply to other platforms. Radio stations are more than the programming listeners hear: They are small businesses paying salaries, property taxes, payroll taxes, rent, utilities, and more. Additionally, Christian radio stations like our members are uniquely engaged in serving the needs of the community on and off the air. If a new performance tax is implemented, stations may be forced to offset these costs by flipping formats, diverting resources from community service activities, cutting staff, reducing promotional activity, forgoing equipment upgrades, or even shutting down entirely.

The relationship between radio and performers has long thrived to the benefit of listeners, emerging artists, record labels, and stations. New and up-and-coming artists still rely on radio for promotion and exposure. The competing bill, the American Music Fairness Act (H.R.791, S.293) would establish a statutory license for all radio stations, with fees set by the federal government, eliminating the possibility of market-based deals that benefit all parties. Furthermore, the American Music Fairness Act contains no religious exemptions and no cap on higher royalty rates in the future. This constitutes a massive expansion of government into the music licensing space and would mainly benefit the three major record labels (Universal Music Group, Sony Music, and Warner Music Group) that already dominate the music licensing market and own nearly 80 percent of all music.

The recording industry has made no secret of their contempt for broadcasters, accusing those for whom radio is a livelihood of simply being “greedy.” Despite the broadcasting industry’s best efforts, the recording industry has refused to come to the table on this issue and has insisted on a one-sided, winner-takes-all “solution:” eliminate the distinction between digital and non-digital audio transmission and establish a new, federally mandated performance royalty for every track played on radio. This proposal serves only their interests while handicapping radio broadcasters and hindering their vital public service.

In the last Congress, an absolute majority of the House supported the LRFA, signaling clearly that legislation imposing a new performance tax would be dead on arrival. The LRFA was reintroduced in the 118th Congress

with 119 original cosponsors in the House of Representatives, and now enjoys the support of 124 members of Congress.

We would greatly welcome your support for broadcasters as a cosponsor of the Local Radio Freedom Act. Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Troy A. Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Troy A. Miller
President & CEO