



The Honorable Marjorie Taylor Greene
Chairwoman, House Subcommittee on Delivering On Government Efficiency
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Melanie Stansbury
Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Delivering On Government Efficiency
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 21, 2025

Dear Chairwoman Greene, Ranking Member Stansbury and Members of the Subcommittee:

Since 1961, WAMU 88.5 FM, licensed to American University, has been a trusted voice and vital member of the greater Washington Metropolitan community.

As a non-commercial radio station our mission is to connect Washingtonians with each other and the world. We do this every day by providing local, national and international news, as well as educational and entertainment programs. WAMU was one of the original stations recognized by the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, and a founding member of the National Public Radio (NPR) network in 1970. WAMU supports and implements emergency preparedness and response across a listening area whose residents must not only consider weather and transportation (aviation, vehicle, shipping and train) challenges, but also the unique threat and risk that comes with living in and around the capital of the free world.

With a monthly audience of 1 million listeners on broadcast and digital platforms, 1 of every 6 people in the region is turning to WAMU. WAMU is the only public media station that holds the number one ranking in its local market. Our historic and current strength, sharing the stories of life in the nation's capital, includes:

- **WAMU Newsroom:** WAMU's newsroom explores and reports on people and topics of local relevance to provide not only the facts, but insight into the people behind the story. Our immediate and in-depth analysis of the collision of an American Airlines jet and a military Blackhawk helicopter over the Potomac was a tragic moment in our ongoing reporting on safety in and out of Reagan National Airport, a topic of great and grave concern for this community. Our newsroom continues to explore the many layers regarding growth and security of operations at the transportation hub that is both an important community resource and economic engine for the region.
- **WAMU Local News Shows:** Washington D.C. is a seat of national, international, regional and local power and many are employed at the federal or local levels of government. For more than a generation, WAMU's *The Politics Hour with Kojo Nnamdi* has been trusted by residents to explain how policy and practice intersect and impact daily lives. Guests are politicians representing the region at local and national levels, discussing everything from changes at the county and city level to federal policy.
- **WAMU National News Show:** *1A* is the program launched by WAMU to succeed The Diane Rehm Show, in 2017. *1A* led by host Jenn White explores issues relating to the First Amendment and how they shape lives here in Washington, and across the country.
- **WAMU Original Programming:** Beloved weekend programs help Washington D.C. relax and reset. Hot Jazz Saturday Night and The Big Broadcast have been staples on WAMU's broadcast schedule for decades and consistently retain top ranking in their time slots.

WAMU 88.5

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

WAMU is a proud member of the NPR network and a recipient of a Community Service Grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). That 99.5% of Americans have free, universal access to public media is a demonstration of the successful public private partnership that is the NPR network, CPB and local stations. Our listeners represent members from both parties, or no party at all, they are simply people who wish to be informed by an independent, reliable source.

The NPR network facilitates collaboration and efficient use of resources by the more than 1,200 member stations, including WAMU. From the visible: a national news bureau that produces the news magazines Morning Edition and All Things Considered. To the invisible: an interconnected terrestrial, satellite distribution system funded by CPB that includes access to award winning content produced in other markets (WHYY Philadelphia's Fresh Air, WGBH Boston's Here and Now, WBEZ Chicago's Wait Wait...Don't Tell me!); digital platform and marketing support to facilitate audience growth and donations; the NPR network provides tremendous services to public media stations, and through them, Americans.

The support that the CPB provides to stations across the country is vital. In many smaller communities, the funding from CPB Community Service Grants represents a significant portion of that station's revenue. In larger markets, stations like WAMU also receive Community Service Grants, but are also reliant upon the aforementioned satellite system that ensures content delivery and emergency communications across the network as well as the payments of licensing fees for music.

Public media reflects the make-up of our individual communities we represent and serve. In Washington, that means we connect over the pandas at the zoo, cherry blossoms, GoGo music, sports, and politics. As a member of the NPR network and with the CPB's support, WAMU is able to focus on engaging Washingtonians, providing news, information and entertainment. Washingtonians respond - 55% of WAMU's annual operating costs come from individual or family donations, local businesses provide 30% in underwriting support of our service.

Without a doubt, the return on the investment of federal funds – taxpayer dollars – in public media provides significant value and impact. As media continues to consolidate, and access dwindles because many American families cannot afford high-priced cable and satellite delivery, the need for public media only continues to increase.

I respectfully ask – urge – you to continue the longstanding bipartisan support for public media.

Sincerely,



Erika Pulley-Hayes
General Manager, WAMU