



KSMU Radio | Ozarks Public Television
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March 24, 2025

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

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

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you the many ways Ozarks Public Broadcasting serves as a critical source of news, information, and education for thousands of residents across our region.

Telling Local Stories

Ozarks Public Television stands alone in local storytelling. With 37 local documentary features in our library and more than 250 episodes of *Ozarks Watch Video Magazine*, we tell the local stories that nobody else can. Our noncommercial structure allows us to document, present, and preserve the stories of our region with a commitment to mission, public service, and community-building. Commercial entities do not work in this space at this scale. This work is only possible because we exist to provide a public service, not to make a profit.

Informing Local Citizens

KSMU News is a trusted source of information for thousands across the Ozarks. Recently, KSMU has reported extensively on allegations of sexual abuse at a local camp, shared the stories of those impacted, and helped our audiences understand the resulting proposed legislation.

KSMU covers rural municipal matters in areas where few other reporters work – from legal proceedings around the Christian County Library, to a proposed mining operation off the Finley River, to a plan to implement use of body cameras by the Ozark Police Department.

KSMU collaborated with other nonpartisan community organizations to create the *Informed Voter Coalition*. The work of this coalition ensures that constituents hear directly from candidates running for office. Candidates participate and listeners tune in because KSMU is a trusted source of news and information.

Partnering with Local Parents

Ozarks Public Television knows that parents are the first and most important teachers in a child's life. Parents trust the programming we air and rely on the resources we provide to be proactive and involved in their children's education – whether it is accessing trusted educational games on a device or building a customized homeschool curriculum with Ozarks Public Television's local history content, math lessons from PBSKIDS.org, and interactive science lessons from PBS Learning Media.

Reaching Local Communities

Ozarks Public Broadcasting reaches 40 counties across Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. We reach some of the most rural areas in the country and are the only locally owned and operated broadcaster in many of the counties we serve.

Ensuring Local Public Safety

Ozarks Public Broadcasting helps ensure the safety of local citizens by broadcasting emergency alerts via eight transmission points across the Ozarks, providing live weather updates to our listeners, and providing immediate and long-term coverage of impactful events like the 2011 Joplin tornado.

Public media is a shining example of public-private partnership across the country, with each federal dollar matched many times over. At the same time, for small and rural-serving stations like Ozarks Public Broadcasting, federal investment is essential to maintain our core services. Federal support represents a critical 25% of our budget. That investment is valued and supported by local individuals, businesses, and organizations who chip in to make up 75% of the funds needed to keep public media available for themselves and their neighbors across the Ozarks.

Beyond the critical federal funding Ozarks Public Broadcasting receives directly, we benefit significantly from the funds that are leveraged efficiently for the good of all citizens via this national system of independent local stations. Ozarks Public Broadcasting could not even begin, on our own, to cover the cost of the music and program licensing, the creation of high-quality children's educational programming, and the public safety infrastructure that federal funding in the public media system helps ensure. Those services to our local community are only possible because of public support invested in an interconnected system that reaches our entire country.

Ozarks Public Broadcasting is a locally owned and operated organization. We live in the Ozarks, we know the Ozarks, and we exist to serve the Ozarks. But our ability to meaningfully serve our local community is also dependent on our national partners. PBS' commitment to public safety provides us with wireless emergency alerts for geotargeted distribution by cellular carriers, ensuring a reliable backup path for the national alert system. NPR's investment in interconnected infrastructure allows us to seamlessly share stories from the Ozarks with colleagues across Missouri (and beyond) and allows us to bring public radio reporting from across the state (and beyond) to our local audiences.

We are incredibly proud of the fact that our staff, our audience, and our donors represent perspectives across the political spectrum. Ozarks Public Broadcasting is not a partisan organization and our community knows that. I urge you to trust the thousands of citizens across the Ozarks who rely on the services we provide and who consider federal funding in public media one of the best uses of their tax dollars.

Sincerely,



Rachel Knight
General Manager
Ozarks Public Broadcasting