



March 26, 2025

The Honorable Marjorie Taylor Greene
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Delivering On Government Efficiency
U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Melanie Stansbury
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Delivering On Government Efficiency
U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Thank you for this opportunity to help make the case for NPR, PBS, and public media. As the President and CEO of Southern California Public Radio/KPCC-FM—a CPB-qualified public radio station in Pasadena, California, I wish to convey to you the role NPR, PBS, and their member stations play in serving local communities across the country.

We are an independently owned, FCC-licensed nonprofit organization dedicated to delivering local news and trusted information, cultural programming, and public safety alerts. Publicly known as LAist across all delivery platforms, we operate six signals (89.3 KPCC, 89.1 KUOR, 89.5 KJAI, 89.9 K210AD, 90.3 KVLA and 93.3 K227BX), with radio broadcast covering Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties, Coachella Valley, Santa Barbara, and parts of the Inland Empire. Our station provides free, un-paywalled access to our newsroom content across a variety of platforms—broadcast radio, online, and via live events, newsletters, social media, and text messaging.

Founded in 1999, our station provides 24/7 programming on the air and online to Southern Californians. With 160 staff, LAist 89.3 is deeply rooted in our community and committed to our public service mission. All editorial decisions about programming for our audience are made at the station by us - people who know and live in our community. We produce local programs that offer in-depth investigations, fascinating historical narratives, lively conversations, and dynamic performances that elevate underrepresented voices and help Angelenos stay informed, empowered, and inspired.

SCPR/LAist is part of the public media system, a network of independently managed and operated local public radio and television stations. To help understand its role in the U.S. public media:

- Provides essential public services in news, music and cultural programming, and emergency services to Americans nationwide, with more than 42 million people listening across platforms each week.
- Reaches nearly 99% of the U.S. population. With its universal service mission, public media offers free, over-the-air and online programming and is available without a paywall on multiple digital platforms.
- Provides essential service to local communities seeking vital information during emergencies, especially in rural America where fewer sources of local news may be found.
- Is often the main or only source for noncommercial local news, music and entertainment in rural and underserved communities.
- Has received bipartisan Congressional support for the past 50 years and is the basis of the public media public-private partnership.
- Receives federal funding that amounts to about 0.01% of federal spending – only about \$1.60 per person per year.
- On average, raises \$7 from local sources for every \$1 in federal grant money provided. The federal investment is an essential part of a public radio station's annual budget.

SCPR/LAist is a member station of NPR. NPR is vital to locally owned, independent public radio stations like ours because, among other things, NPR:

- Develops and maintains an interconnected terrestrial, satellite, and digital distribution system that connects and distributes content to more than 1,200 stations and other public radio producers.
- Provides an enterprise content management system that enables real-time sharing of content among stations and NPR. This enhances editorial capacity through shared services and elevates local news stories. We partner with national producers, like NPR, to provide a full complement of local, national, and international news and educational programming.
- Serves as the backbone of the nation's emergency alert system and supporting stations' public safety work.
- Offers multiple services such as opportunities for collaborative journalism with more than 200 independent newsrooms in the NPR Network, audience research, digital services for our online audiences, fundraising support, and negotiation of music rights that enriches programs and expands noncommercial music throughout the country.

Locally, in the Los Angeles area, we provide broadcast and on-demand audio stories via radio station LAist 89.3 (KPCC-FM) on various topics and issues to the region, with news updates throughout the day as well as longer produced pieces. Our flagship daily public affairs radio show "AirTalk," is entering its 40th year and offers in-depth conversations on local news, politics, science, the arts, entertainment and more. The station also presents multiday coverage to tell stories about topics with a large and universal impact affecting many people in the broadcast area.

The 2024 elections were important for Southern California, with key seats for Los Angeles City Council and LAUSD Board of Education, a hotly contested race for LA County District Attorney, and ten state propositions. In response, the newsroom created a comprehensive, fact-based Voter Game Plan site to provide Southern Californians with information about the voting process, the duties of elected offices, campaign finance, and city, county, and state races and measures—the last in partnership with nonprofit newsroom CalMatters. The Voter Game Plan is nonpartisan and does not endorse any candidates or measures. In 2024, it was supported by broadcast coverage and events, and reached more voters than ever before, with 2 million people—equivalent to about 25% of all registered voters in Los Angeles and Orange counties—using it to make informed choices at the ballot box.

Our station plays an integral role in our local community. During the recent wildfires that affected Southern California, KPCC had an unprecedented number of people coming to us to help them navigate the disasters. The morning after the fires began, we had five times the normal traffic on our website, LAist.com. In a 24-hour period, we reached nearly half a million Angelenos digitally.

I urge you to preserve the longstanding bipartisan support for public media that Congress has provided for over 50 years. Any cuts to cuts in funding for public media would be damaging to public media ecosystem and the essential services we deliver. I urge you to consider the vital role of NPR, PBS, and local public media stations like ours, and to support this vital public service in our communities and the nation.

Sincerely,



Alejandra Santamaria
President & CEO