

NABOB

National Association of
Black Owned Broadcasters

May 31, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
House Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Pallone and Wicker and Ranking Members Walden and Cantwell:

As your committees examine the media marketplace in the coming weeks and months, the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) urges you to allow the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization (STELAR) Act to expire as intended. Further, your committees should reject any suggestions that would diminish the ability of local broadcasters to continue to invest in what makes our medium truly unique and irreplaceable: our service to local communities.

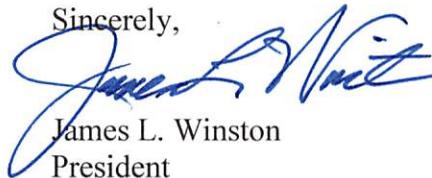
NABOB is the first and only trade organization representing the interests of African-American owners of radio and television stations across the country. In an increasingly fragmented media marketplace, the connection that local broadcasting has with multicultural and African-American audiences remains vital. NABOB's diverse owners of local broadcast stations are proud to be the voices of our communities and take seriously our responsibility to keep audiences informed in an era of mischaracterization of facts and mean rhetoric.

Your committees can ensure that local broadcasting continues to serve these multicultural and African-American audiences through the expiration of STELAR. STELAR's subsidy to encourage satellite competition with cable monopolies has succeeded. This law now merely incentivizes the neglect of viewers and denial of access to local broadcast stations. Congress should no longer facilitate the satellite industry's business decision to underserve local communities.

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Finally, your committees should reject calls for changes to the media marketplace rules that would undermine investment in local broadcasting in favor of the bottom lines of our competitors. Proposals designed to enhance the negotiating leverage of the pay-TV industry – whether cloaked as well-intentioned consumer protections or mere modernization of outdated rules – should be given no consideration. For local broadcasting to continue to serve our communities, we must be able to seek fair compensation and compete in the marketplace. The success and growth of the next generation of diverse broadcast owners is counting on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James L. Winston".

James L. Winston
President