

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK OWNED BROADCASTERS

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September 9, 2014

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The Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Thune
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Rockefeller and Ranking Member Thune:

The National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) is very concerned about a pending proposal called "Local Choice." This proposal is a dangerous and costly bill that would hurt diversity in broadcasting, hit consumers' wallets, and decrease Americans' access to critical information and news alerts.

When consumers purchase basic cable packages, they get a bundle of channels that include all television broadcast access networks. Under broadcast-only a la carte, as proffered in the Local Choice proposal as part of the Satellite Television Access and Viewer Rights Act (STAVRA), the cable offerings would stay the same at a fixed price, but the basic tier would be broken up into disparate broadcast entities to be purchased separately, *in addition to the cable package cost*. Not surprisingly, this model

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has been found to increase costs for consumers and depress demand for diverse and independent programming.

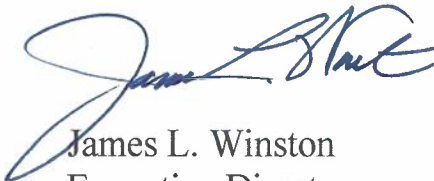
Minority-owned stations depend upon attracting viewers by being included on basic cable tiers of service. Without these valuable viewers, stations could lose advertisers and experience severe financial difficulties.

The recent recession has resulted in the loss of numerous African American owned stations. In recent months we have seen a slight rebound in station acquisitions by African Americans and other minorities. Now more than ever, NABOB, its members, and the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural viewers we serve, are seeking to recover and gain ground in minority ownership, not lose it.

Without widely-available programming geared toward minority communities, it would be even more difficult for Americans to tune in and educate themselves with ideas or cultures they may not encounter on a daily basis. In order for diverse programming to thrive – and in fact survive – in America, bills like “Local Choice” must not become law.

We ask you to consider the negative effect this bill would have on America’s underserved communities, and to not pass this proposal. For minority communities, the term “Local Choice” is patently untrue. This bill could extinguish the recent upswing in minority ownership and turn the industry back down a bleak path that could exclude African-American station owners.

Sincerely,



James L. Winston
Executive Director