

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable Alan Mollohan
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Wolf:

We are writing to convey our support for the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP) at the Department of Commerce and to respectfully request that your subcommittee include \$44 million in FY 2011 for this program.

For some four decades, PTFP has single-handedly served as the critical infrastructure program which helped build and maintain a public broadcasting system of radio and television stations that reaches more than 95 percent of America's population. In doing so, it has helped to ensure that stations have the ability to construct, replace and maintain a vast network of transmitters, translators, towers, antennas and other vital content delivery equipment. In addition to providing the only federal source of start-up funding for stations looking to enter unserved and underserved communities, often on Native American reservations or in rural communities, PTFP remains the only source of emergency assistance for stations impacted by a natural or man-made disaster.

PTFP has been drastically under-funded the past several years, suffering an 18% cut in FY 2002 and FY 2003, an additional 50% cut in FY 2004. The result is that PTFP has been unable to keep pace with the essential infrastructure needs of public broadcasting. The backlog of projects has grown, with applications to the program outnumbering grants more than 2 to 1 in the last several years. Funding at \$44 million for FY 2011 would restore the program to pre-2004 levels. Like all infrastructure projects, the benefits for employment and service are numerous, while and the costs and risks of inaction rise each year that vital projects are left unfunded.

In recent years some have claimed that the program is no longer needed now that the digital transition is complete. This view reflects a fundamental misconception of PTFP. As part of its overall mission to provide stations with resources for upgrades and improvements, *some* PTFP funds have gone to help stations meet the mandated digital conversion needs. However, in the same time period, PTFP has also been critical for stations requiring emergency equipment replacement, providing first-time service to communities, and facing regular equipment upgrades and maintenance costs. If PTFP were eliminated, stations would have nowhere to

turn in the future when digital equipment needs to be replaced or upgraded. Digital equipment will age faster than analog equipment. Already, some stations that transitioned to digital 10 years ago are requesting PTFP funds for replacement equipment assistance.

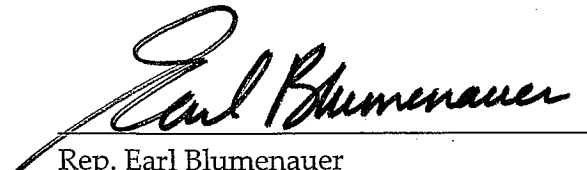
On average, stations leverage PTFP funding to locally raise an additional 50 percent of infrastructure and maintenance costs—resulting in a very successful public private-partnership committed to protecting one of this nation's most valued resources. Moreover, PTFP creates jobs and promotes economic growth by providing funds for major construction projects throughout the country.

PTFP funding is about more than towers and antennas. Because of PTFP, nearly every U.S. household has access to the reliable quality of educational, cultural and public affairs programming offered by their local public television and radio stations—regardless of where those households are located. PTFP makes it possible for people that cannot afford to pay for cable or satellite to have continued access to quality programming that educates their families, enlightens their lives, and allows them to explore the world. PTFP also gives the necessary support for stations to provide the millions of people who are hearing and visually impaired with radio and television captioned services and reading programs.

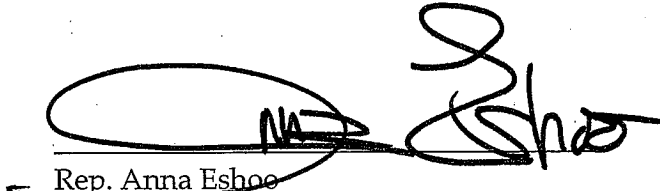
PTFP is a critical resource for locally-owned and operated stations providing communities with the public broadcasting services ranging from childhood literacy, workforce training, public affairs, rich local journalism, cultural programming and emergency services.

We believe Congress should renew its commitment to PTFP to ensure public broadcasting will continue to thrive and we ask that your subcommittee approve this request of \$44 million in FY 2011 for PTFP.

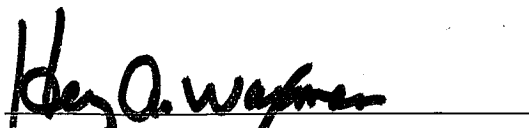
Sincerely,



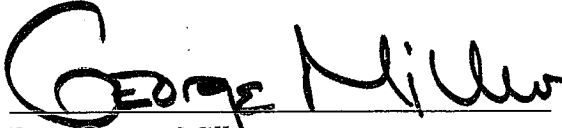
Rep. Earl Blumenauer



Rep. Anna Eshoo



Rep. Henry Waxman



Rep. George Miller

Jason Altmire

Rep. Jason Altmire

Tammy Baldwin

Rep. Tammy Baldwin

Shelley Berkley

Rep. Shelley Berkley

Howard L. Berman

Rep. Howard Berman

Leonard L. Boswell

Rep. Leonard Boswell

Bruce L. Braley

Rep. Bruce Braley

Joseph Cao

Rep. Joseph Cao

Lois Capps

Rep. Lois Capps

Michael G. Capuano

Rep. Michael Capuano

Russ Carnahan

Rep. Russ Carnahan

Chris Carney

Rep. Chris Carney

Yvette D. Clarke

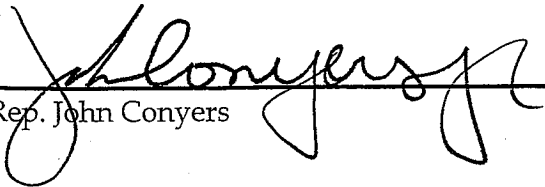
Rep. Yvette Clarke


Emanuel Cleaver

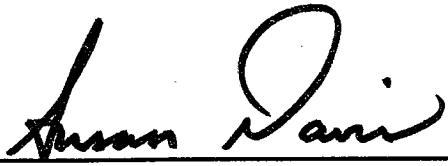
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver

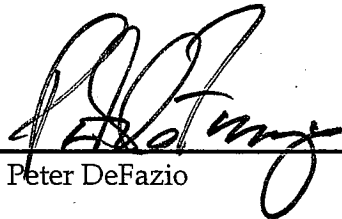
Gerry Connolly


Rep. Gerry Connolly


Rep. John Conyers


Rep. Elijah Cummings

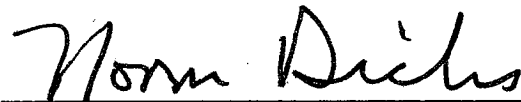

Rep. Susan Davis

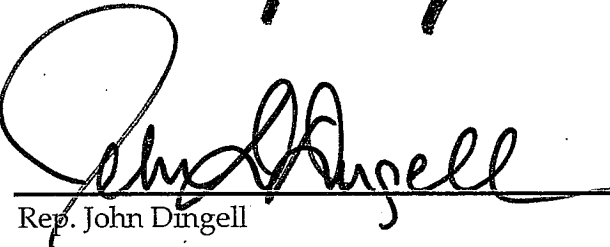

Rep. Peter DeFazio

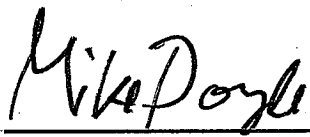

Rep. Diana DeGette



Rep. William Delahunt

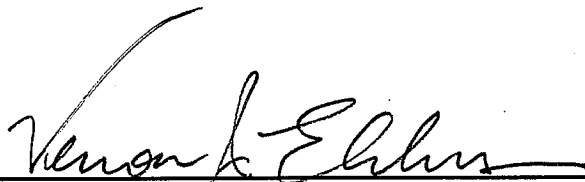

Rep. Don Young

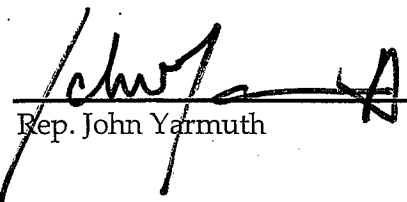

Rep. Norm Dicks

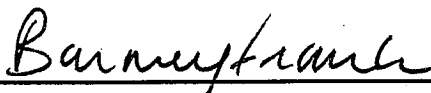

Rep. John Dingell

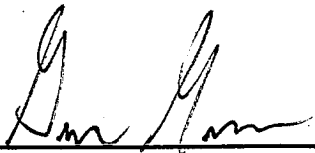

Rep. Michael Doyle


Rep. Edolphus Towns


Rep. Vernon Ehlers


Rep. John Yarmuth

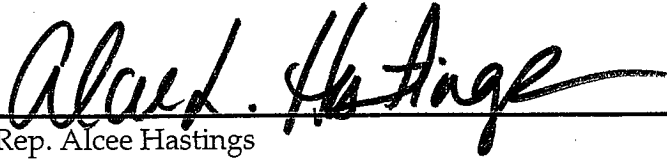

Rep. Barney Frank



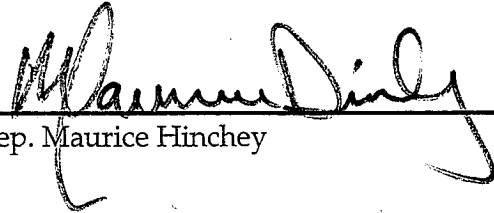
Rep. Gene Green



Rep. Raul Grijalva



Rep. Alcee Hastings

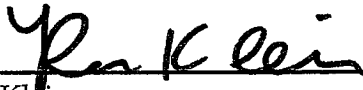


Rep. Maurice Hinchey

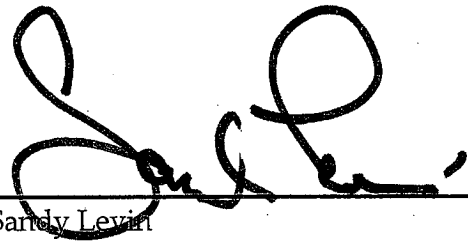


Rep. Rush Holt

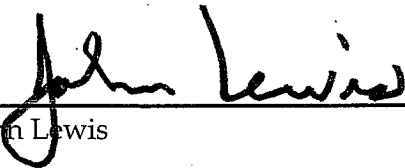
Rep. Peter King



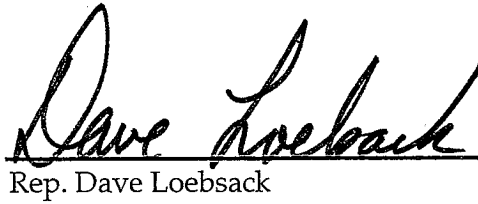
Rep. Ron Klein



Rep. Sandy Levin



Rep. John Lewis



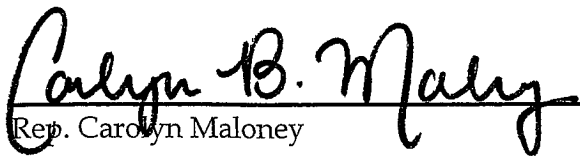
Rep. Dave Loebsack



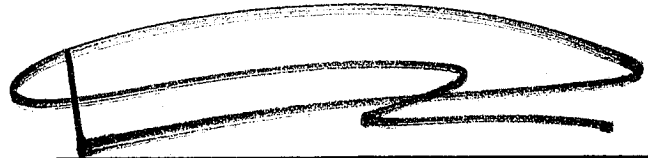
Rep. Zoe Lofgren



Rep. Daniel Maffei



Rep. Carolyn Maloney



Rep. David Wu

Doris O. Matsui

Rep. Dorris Matsui

Carolyn McCarthy

Rep. Carolyn McCarthy

Mike McIntyre

Rep. Mike McIntyre

Jerry McNerney

Rep. Jerry McNerney

Lynn Woolsey

Rep. Lynn Woolsey

Rosa DeLauro

Rep. Rosa DeLauro

Errol Nadler

Rep. Errol Nadler

Bill Owens

Rep. Bill Owens

Chellie Pingree

Rep. Chellie Pingree

Mike Ross

Rep. Mike Ross

Allyson Schwartz

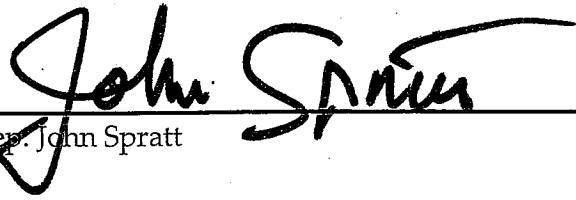
Rep. Allyson Schwartz

Robert Scott

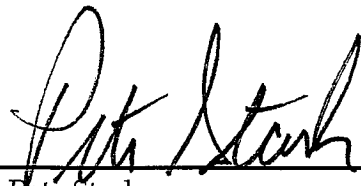
Rep. Robert Scott

Albio Sires

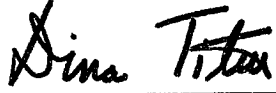
Rep. Albio Sires



Rep. John Spratt



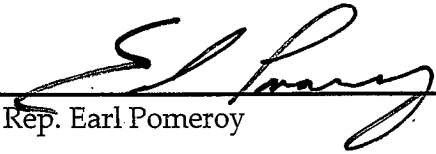
Rep. Pete Stark



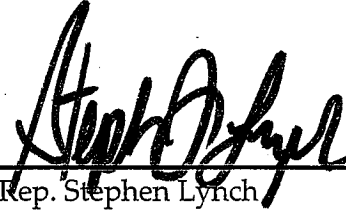
Rep. Dina Titus



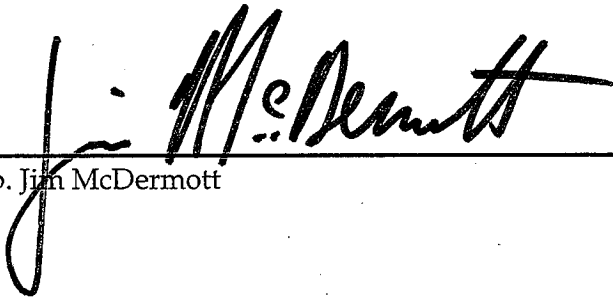
Rep. Paul Tonko



Rep. Earl Pomeroy



Rep. Stephen Lynch



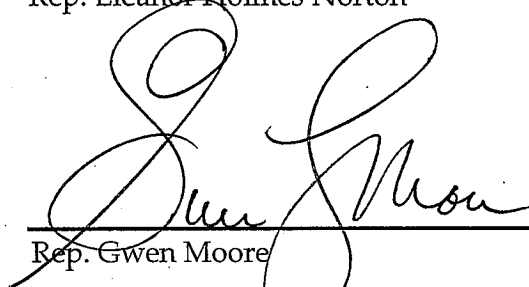
Rep. Jim McDermott



Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton



Rep. Bill Pascrell



Rep. Gwen Moore



Rep. Vic Snyder



Rep. Paul Hodes

Betty Sutton

Rep. Betty Sutton

Nick Rahall

Rep. Nick J. Rahall

Edolphus Towns

Rep. Edolphus Towns

Don Young

Rep. Don Young

Edward J. Markey

Rep. Edward Markey

Jay Inslee

Rep. Jay Inslee

Jim Matheson

Rep. Jim Matheson

Bill Pascrell

Rep. Bill Pascrell

Michael H. Michaud

Rep. Michael Michaud

Melvin E. Watt

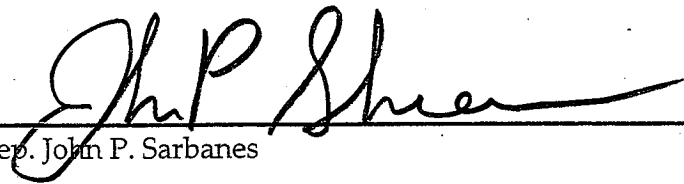
Rep. Melvin Watt

Phil Hare

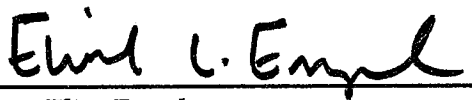
Rep. Phil Hare

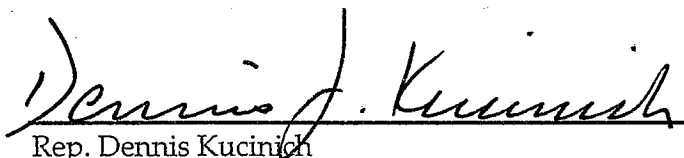
Steve Cohen

Rep. Steve Cohen


Rep. John P. Sarbanes


Rep. Donald Payne


Rep. Eliot Engel


Rep. Dennis Kucinich