



AMERICAN
PRINCIPLES PROJECT

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
H-329, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Emmer
H-150, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 31, 2024

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Scalise, and Whip Emmer:

We write to you today to express the urgency of protecting the lifeline of local communities and the backbone of emergency communications in our country: AM radio. Recently, many vehicle manufacturers, particularly electric vehicle manufacturers, have begun to remove AM radio from their new models. This unnecessary and unjustified decision threatens to destroy the viability of AM radio, which will in turn eliminate one of the most important communication tools available.

In response, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress have expressed their support for legislation that will require auto manufacturers to continue to make AM radio available in every car. This bill, the AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act (H.R. 8449/H.R. 3413), is expected to be reported favorably out of the Energy and Commerce Committee soon. Additionally, the legislation has the support of 256 Members of the House and 62 Senators.

We write to you today to express our support for H.R. 8449 because of the importance of AM radio to local communities, for political discourse, and as part of the communications infrastructure during times of emergency. We encourage you to take this bill to the House floor as soon as possible, where we anticipate overwhelming support.

The federal government's emergency response plans are directly related to the availability of AM radio. No other communication medium has the reach of AM radio, covering at least 90% of the American population. It is also the most resilient form of communication. When the power goes out and cell service is down, AM radio continues to provide free, local, and trusted news and information. While nearly 4500 AM stations operate across the United States, a collection of 77 radio stations, known as Primary Entry Points, are crucial to FEMA's ability to communicate with Americans in the event of an emergency. These stations have been hardened to withstand the most extreme circumstances. Accordingly, FEMA and the National Weather Service have built direct links with these PEP stations so that they can communicate crucial, public safety news and information during a disaster or a moment of crisis.

The availability of AM radio in all vehicles is critical to public safety. As seven former leaders of FEMA explained, "Because of the great distances that its signal carries, and due to its resiliency

during even the worst natural disasters, the success of the National Public Warning System hinges on the use of AM Radio. However, should EV makers continue removing AM radios from their vehicles, this vital public safety system will no longer function as intended.”

Beyond emergency communication, our concern for the future of AM radio is rooted in the importance of reaching and connecting with local listeners on the most salient issues that may impact their businesses, health, education, and family. Information about local events and local concerns has a home on AM radio. On Friday night, you can tune in to listen to a high school football game; on Saturdays, you can find the latest local political news; and on Sunday morning, you can find a broadcast of a local church service. These are the elements of community that bind us together. We fear that nationalizing all of our information sources is a recipe for isolating Americans who won't know their neighbors or be able to lean on their community.

Lastly, political discourse is the backbone of democracy. In America, the First Amendment protects speech and, as Americans, we are the great beneficiary of the wonderfully dynamic political discourse on our airwaves. Some of the most influential Americans, from Martin Luther King, Jr. to Rush Limbaugh, have broadcast on AM radio. If you believe, as we do, that political speech is paramount to our success as a nation, maintaining this vital mode of debate is important to our national future.

Leaders across the spectrum, including Hugh Hewitt, Sean Hannity, Erick Erickson, Mark Levin, and President Donald J. Trump, have expressed their support for maintaining AM radio in vehicles. We are proud to join them today in signaling our support for H.R. 8449, the AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act, and we encourage prompt House passage of this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Terry Schilling
President
American Principles Project

Jordan Sekulow
President & CEO
ACLJ Action

Jon Schweppe
Policy Director
American Principles Project

Judson Phillips
Founder
Tea Party Nation

Ryan Walker
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Jude Russo
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Aiden Buzzetti
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