



NABOB

National Association of
Black Owned Broadcasters

May 8, 2023

The Honorable Steven Horsford
Chairman, Congressional Black Caucus
United States House of Representatives
406 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Horsford:

The National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) is the first and only trade organization representing the interests of African American owners of radio and television stations across the country. Founded in 1976 by a small group of African American broadcasters, NABOB has grown into an important industry voice, working to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the broadcast industry.

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern regarding the removal of AM radio from some electric vehicles and to advocate for its continued availability. In fact, of the top 20 automakers producing vehicles in the United States, eight of them have removed AM broadcast from their EVs with one major automaker removing the AM radio from their entire fleet of non-commercial vehicles. This represents a huge setback for AM radio stations serving the needs of the African American community, as AM radio is a crucial medium for delivering content that is culturally relevant and often missing from other formats. More broadly, the removal of AM radio from electric vehicles would be a step backward in broadcasters' efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity in media. It would reinforce the dominance of mainstream media outlets and limit the diversity of voices and perspectives that are heard.

As the trade association representing the interests of African American broadcasters, these actions are deeply concerning, especially because, according to a recent report from Nielsen, over 80 million people in the United States listen to AM radio each month. Additionally, many AM radio stations are locally owned and operated, so they have a vested interest in covering stories that address the unique cultural and local needs of the communities they serve. African American have a limited number of media outlets that cater to their specific needs, and AM radio helps to fill that gap by providing a platform for locally produced content that is relevant to their audience. For decades, local Black owned radio stations have provided a voice for underrepresented groups, promoted local businesses, and advocated for social justice and civil rights.

The Honorable Steven Horsford

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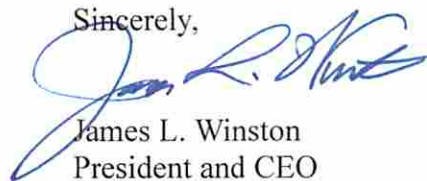
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AM radio also plays a vital role in providing African American communities with religious and cultural programming, which enables them to maintain cultural connections and foster a sense of community. Furthermore, AM radio provides a critical source of local news and information for communities that may be overlooked by larger media outlets. Delivering this content over-the-air ensures that it is accessible to those who may not have reliable internet access or who cannot afford subscription services. For those living in rural areas, with unreliable wireless and/or broadband connections, AM radio is widely available, always on, and accessible without subscription fees or data caps. During times of emergency and natural disasters, when power outages often cause wireless networks to fail, AM radio stations form the backbone of the emergency alert system. With the removal of AM from the dash, auto manufacturers are undermining the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) system for delivering critical public safety information.

We ask that you help us convey to auto manufacturers the importance of AM broadcast radio to African Americans across the U.S. It is a crucial resource to maintain cultural and community ties as well as an important source of local news, weather, entertainment, religious and spiritual content every single day, not just during times of emergency. We look forward to working with you to maintain AM radio in the dashboard of electric vehicles made in America.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James L. Winston", is written over the typed name.

James L. Winston
President and CEO

cc: Representative Yvette Clarke
Representative Troy Carter
Representative Lucy McBath
Representative Marilyn Strickland