

April X, 2020

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting local communities across our nation in unprecedented ways. All Americans are attempting to understand the full measure of this crisis, even as it continues to evolve on a daily basis. As in many of our nation's most challenging times, the public turns to free and local media for life-saving information and breaking news, because local radio, television and newspapers are still the most trusted sources in times of emergency and disaster. We urge you work with us in ensuring that local media can continue to inform communities, even as these outlets face unprecedented economic distress.

Local news and information on radio, television and newsprint is more in demand than ever, yet local media outlets are experiencing catastrophic losses in the advertising revenue that allows them to continue investing in providing that news to the public. This national emergency has caused a near halt to local business activity and in turn, the regular and vital advertising they purchase from local media. Without advertising revenue, local media outlets cannot survive.

We believe that Executive Branch agencies have a powerful opportunity to support local media and promote public awareness by directing that federal spending on advertising be prioritized for local media outlets. Specifically, we encourage federal agencies to put into action today already funded campaigns to achieve certain public objectives as well as potential promotions of the economic stimulus programs provided for by the CARES Act and other recent legislation. We urge you to:

- 1) Direct your Cabinet secretaries to review any resources intended to be used for advertising campaigns and have them expedite such activities with local media outlets;
- 2) Direct federal agency advertising dollars for existing and new federal programs where community outreach is needed for spending with local media, including those serving minority and rural communities; and
- 3) Incentivize a portion of stimulus funds provided to businesses for their recovery efforts for advertising on local media.

To get America moving again and strengthen our communities in the midst of this evolving crisis, we must be creative and use all available tools. Advertising plays an incredible role in local economies, and its importance to the sustainability of local broadcast stations and newspapers cannot be overstated. We thank you for your efforts so that Americans may continue to rely on the sources of local information they trust the most.

Sincerely,

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Bill Flores
Member of Congress