

Resolution #80A-25-07

Restoring Federal Funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Local Public Media

As union members, we have fought for decades to protect good jobs, strengthen our communities, and ensure that working people have access to information they can trust. Public broadcasting has been a cornerstone of that mission for more than half a century. Established by Congress in 1967, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) has provided stable, noncommercial funding for local PBS and NPR stations, ensuring that educational, cultural, and fact-based programming reaches every corner of our nation—urban, rural, and tribal alike.

CPB funding supports the work of CWA, NABET-CWA and NewsGuild-CWA members who produce award-winning journalism, educational children's programming, and community-focused content that commercial media often ignores. These programs strengthen civic engagement, provide a platform for diverse voices, and serve as a trusted source of information in times of crisis. From live coverage of elections to emergency broadcasting during natural disasters, public media plays a vital role in sustaining our democracy.

For decades, federal investment in public broadcasting has been a small but critical part of the federal budget, returning enormous value to the public. Yet the Trump administration proposed rescinding all federal funding for CPB and, by extension, local PBS and NPR stations. Congress then voted to approve this rescission, jeopardizing a key source of stability for hundreds of public radio and television stations, particularly those serving rural and underserved communities.

The elimination of CPB funding directly threatens the jobs of CWA members who work in public broadcasting. Without this support, many stations will be forced to cut staff, reduce local programming, and, in some cases, shut down entirely. The loss of these jobs will have ripple effects in the communities they serve, weakening access to educational content, cultural programming, and fact-based journalism.

This attack on public broadcasting is part of a broader effort to dismantle public institutions that serve the common good. It comes alongside direct threats from FCC Chairman Brendan Carr, who, in January 2025, ordered an enforcement investigation into NPR and PBS member stations over alleged violations in on-air sponsorships, known as "underwriting." Carr suggested some stations may be illegally running commercials, potentially providing justification for further congressional defunding. Critics note that these investigations serve to stoke political pressure and undermine public media independence.

RESOLVED: CWA condemns the Trump administration's decision to request, and Congress's decision to approve, the rescission of federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which jeopardizes the jobs of CWA members, undermines access to trusted information, and erodes a vital public service.

RESOLVED: CWA condemns FCC Chairman Brendan Carr's investigation into public media underwriting as a politically motivated tactic designed to delegitimize public broadcasting and justify further defunding of local PBS and NPR stations.

RESOLVED: CWA reaffirms its commitment to defending public broadcasting as an essential institution that informs, educates, and connects communities across the nation.

RESOLVED: CWA will mobilize our members, allies, and the public to call on Congress to fully restore CPB funding in the federal budget, ensuring that local PBS and NPR stations can continue to serve their communities with integrity and independence.

RESOLVED: CWA will hold accountable any elected officials who vote to defund public broadcasting or misuse regulatory power to undermine it, and we will work to elect candidates who support strong, stable funding for public media and the union jobs it sustains.