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July 11, 2011

The Honorable John Dingell
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Dingell,

The Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB) applauds your tireless efforts to assure that over-the-air television reaches every one of your constituents and the nation. The broadcasters in your state thank you for all of your efforts to maintain a strong over-the-air broadcasting system.

In Section 303 of your bill, HR 2482 you have added many of the requirements that broadcasters feel are necessary for the industry to continue to serve the news and emergency communication needs of viewers. You also provide protection for broadcasters to innovate. In the future there will be even more new technology available to broadcasters. Your bill allows for advancements to be made available to viewers by prohibiting the FCC from involuntarily moving television stations from the UHF band to another inferior band that will not support new technology and, by its nature, has much more interference.

We appreciate that your bill requires the FCC to replicate the existing service area, viewership and interference levels of broadcasters and added measures to assure that spectrum auctions are voluntary. We thank you for that. This is essential for both the viewer and broadcaster alike. More and more people are cutting their cable and satellite services for over-the-air television. We must support their economic decision and not force them to a paid service to get a local broadcast signal.

The nation's broadcasters, as well as those in Michigan, work cooperatively with first responders in times of emergencies and we support efforts to provide them with a state-of-the-art broadband network. We also recognize the demand for spectrum by advanced wireless services. However, it is vital that Congress protects local broadcasters and their delivery of important news and emergency information to the nation. Broadcasters are often the only technology standing long after cell phones, land lines and the Internet go down. This was proven in the recent Missouri floods. We appreciate your understanding of this delicate balance of need.

We thank you for the financial stability that your legislation will provide the industry by insuring reimbursement of costs that a broadcaster may incur due to reassignment of a station to a different digital channel. Congressman Dingell, we also are certain that you are aware of the particularly difficult issues repacking television channels in Detroit will create due to our treaty with Canada.

Your knowledgeable and thoughtful consideration of the needs of broadcasters, viewers and the nation are always appreciated. We thank you for your efforts on behalf of the nation.

Most Sincerely,

Karole L. White
President/CEO