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# Congressman Mike Pence

6th District Of Indiana

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### PENCE UNVEILS BILL TO PROHIBIT RETURN OF "FAIRNESS DOCTRINE" FOR TALK RADIO

*"There is Nothing Fair about the Fairness Doctrine"*

Washington, Jun 27 - WASHINGTON, DC—In remarks to be presented on the floor of the U.S. House today, U.S. Congressman Mike Pence, a former radio talk show host, will discuss a bill he plans to introduce that would prevent reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine:

"The American people love a fair fight, especially where the issues of the day are debated. In a free market, fairness should be determined based upon equal opportunity, not equal results. As some voices are calling for Congress to enforce their idea of 'fairness' upon the American people, it would be good for us to proceed with caution whenever some would achieve their 'fairness' by limiting the freedom of others.



Rep. Pence on Fox

"Beginning in 1949, the Federal Communications Commission and its precursor developed and enforced the so-called Fairness Doctrine. The Fairness Doctrine required broadcasters to present controversial issues in a fair and balanced manner. However, because of the lack of clarity in the Commission's ruling, broadcasters opted to offer non-controversial programming in lieu of hours of paperwork or countless legal fees.

"Thankfully, the FCC began to overturn its own ruling on the Fairness Doctrine in 1985. And, following that change in policy by the FCC and President Reagan's veto of attempts to reinstate it, the results have been dramatic. The lifting of the Fairness Doctrine has opened the public airwaves to free and vigorous discussion of controversial issues by individuals of all political stripes.

"Since the demise of the Fairness Doctrine, talk radio has emerged as a dynamic forum for public debate and an asset to the nation.

"Unfortunately, in the name of fairness, there has been much talk in recent days about the need to level the playing field of radio broadcasting by restoring the Fairness Doctrine.

"A liberal think tank recently condemned what they called the 'massive imbalance' on the radio airwaves.

"Some elected officials have said that Congress should 'deal with that problem' and others are 'looking at' bringing back this outright regulation of the American political debate.

"Bringing back the Fairness Doctrine would amount to government control over political views expressed on the public airwaves. It is a dangerous proposal to suggest the government should be in the business of rationing free speech.



"Congress must take action to ensure that this archaic remnant of a bygone era of American radio does not return. There is nothing fair about the Fairness Doctrine.

"During my years in radio and television, I developed a great respect for a free and independent press. Since being in Congress, I have been the recipient of praise and criticism from broadcast media, but it has not changed my fundamental belief that a free and independent press must be vigorously defended by those who love liberty. It is with this in mind that I will introduce the Broadcaster Freedom Act.

"The Broadcaster Freedom Act will prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from prescribing rules, regulations, or policies that will reinstate the requirement that broadcasters present opposing viewpoints in controversial issues of public importance. The Broadcaster Freedom Act will prevent the FCC or any future President from reinstating the Fairness Doctrine. This legislation ensures true freedom and fairness will remain on our radio airwaves, and I would encourage my colleagues to cosponsor and support this bill.

**"John F. Kennedy stated, 'We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people.'"**

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