

Public broadcasting is a favorite source for reliable information for Americans. Shows like *Now* and *The Newshour* are trusted by Americans to give them the straight story about current events in our world. By cutting funding to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting we are attacking our strongest source of unbiased, diverse, and cultured programming available.

These proposed cuts are just another step in the Bush Administration's agenda to dismantle Public Broadcasting and silence one of the last objective voices in American media. The President's recent attempts to politicize PBS by bringing in a partisan activist to be President of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are shameful.

I urge my colleagues to support the Obey amendment to restore the funding it needs and protect the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as a powerful voice of the people.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in very strong support of this amendment in support of public broadcasting.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Obey-Lowey-Leach Amendment that would recoup full funding for the Corporation of Public Broadcasting for Fiscal Year 2006 because it will maintain the highest quality programming available to the American people today.

The Labor-HHS Appropriations Act before us today will eliminate \$100 million in Federal funding for the CPB.

This bill will eliminate existing funding earmarked for interconnecting local stations and the transition to digital broadcasting—both necessary modernizations to carry public broadcasting through this century. Money to fund these improvements will be taken from general operating expenses, further limiting public broadcasters' resources.

Public broadcasting provides unique programming not found on major broadcast stations or cable television. Its programming aims to increase awareness, provide multiple viewpoints, treat complex social issues completely, and provide objective forums for deliberation. Public broadcasting serves no partisan master.

It is the most "fair and balanced" programming available. Its listening audience, polls have shown, is 1/3 liberal, 1/3 conservative, and 1/3 middle of the road politically.

Newt Gingrich tried to zero out public broadcasting subsidies 10 years ago. He acknowledged before an audience recently an ironic evolution. He listens to NPR every morning now as he drives to work.

While most television programming provides few outlets targeted and appropriate for young children, public broadcasting offers families unparalleled excellence and value. Whether it is *Sesame Street* or *Reading Rainbow*, public programs have taught generations of children practical grammatical and arithmetic skills while expanding their imagination and creativity. At a cost of just over \$1 per year per person, what parents and children get from free, over-the-air public television and public radio is an incredible bargain and a national asset.

In Arlington, WETA, an invaluable FM and television station that serves us in Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, estimates that the proposed cuts will result in the loss of \$1.6 million. Like most stations, WETA operates on a limited budget and the magnitude of this cut threatens the cancellation of programming such as "Talk of the Nation", "Sesame Street" or "Marketplace." I'm even more afraid for rural radio and television stations that are even more reliant on public funding.

America won't accept a cut in these services. The harm they would do to children's education and the marketplace of ideas outweighs what little effect these cuts would have in the reduction of government spending. The American people understand we have a robust economy today. These cuts in programming are to pay for the tax cuts we've enacted over the last 5 years for the wealthiest among us.

If anything, we demand an expansion of public broadcasting. We want more programming that promotes detail, diversity, and balance. We need programs that take creative risks to engage the public in thoughtful discourse.

I urge my colleagues to support the Obey-Lowey-Leach Amendment and restore funding for the CPB. Do it for your own children.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I know the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) has the right to close. How much time do I have remaining?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, let me say the choice before the House is simple. I think the American people recognize that public television and public radio are both national treasures. I think also that we all recognize that there has been a systematic attack on both for quite some time.

What is before us today is a very simple choice. We can either stand with those who are determined to see to it that public radio and public television continue to function reasonably effectively, or we can take an action today which will gut the ability of many of the stations to continue to produce quality programming and meet the needs of local areas.

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Some objection has been raised to the offsets. The fact is, under the budget resolution, tough choices are required. You cannot get the offsets out of thin air. These offsets do as little damage to management accounts as is humanly possible. If anyone does not like the offsets involved, then I would suggest they amend the budget resolution so that we do not have to provide them.

But the choice is very simply: Are you going to support public broadcasting or are you not? And the vote will tell the tale.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, let me say, reiterate, I am a fan of public broadcasting and

public radio; and, of course, my family members like *Elmo* and *Big Bird* and *Between the Lions*.

I do not have a closed mind on this subject. I am sure it will come up in conference in making agreement with the other body; but let me say to my colleagues, right now you are choosing between public television, and we provided \$300 million in the bill, keep in mind there. We are not taking it all away. There is \$300 million there. This is only 25 percent of this that we are talking about.

On the other side of the scales, you are going to hurt employment and training for young people. You are going to hurt the Department of Labor. You are going to hurt the Department of Health and Human Services that provides the Centers for Disease Control, that provides the National Institutes of Health on health research. You are going to hurt the Department of Education and their higher education programs and their departmental management.

I think when we put it on the scale, on one side is public television, we are giving them \$300 million in this bill. They have the capacity to raise a lot of money in the public sector. On the other side of the scale are young people that need an opportunity for job retraining, that need an opportunity to participate in the American Dream. Those Departments have no ability to go out and raise money as does the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment. It is not the last word on this subject, but understand the trade-offs that I think are very damaging to young people and their opportunities in terms of higher education and job retraining.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Obey-Lowey-Leach amendment, which restores the full, previously appropriated level of funding to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, or CPB. As someone who has contributed personally to both NPR and PBS, the committee's scant proposal for CPB funding comes as a supreme disappointment.

Public television and radio stations are locally controlled. The primary mission of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is to enable those local stations to remain independent and free of advertising by providing a guaranteed, content-independent source of funding. For this reason, the Corporation's funding is set 2 years in advance. Mr. Chairman, I hope my colleagues can keep that in mind: the funding that the Obey-Lowey-Leach amendment seeks to restore has already been passed. In 2003, I voted along with 241 of my colleagues to appropriate \$400 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in fiscal year 2006. That the committee now seeks to override the will of the whole House is simply unfair to the stations and their viewers.

Each week, more than 80 million people watch PBS. Without even counting the 30 million who listen to NPR during that same period, that's a minimum of 80 million Americans who ask us each week to support this amendment. They may not leave their family rooms,

they may not pick up the phone, but make no mistake: they're voting with their remote controls. Each and every week, they're telling us how they feel.

Opponents of CPB funding regularly claim that Federal funding cuts will have no significant effect on public programming, and that public television can easily absorb any funding cut. But look at the facts: the Corporation for Public Broadcasting provides critical, irreplaceable support to some of public television's most popular programs. Had the proposed funding cuts been enacted for the current year, they would have caused a 20 percent drop in funding for Reading Rainbow. A 20 percent drop in funding for Sesame Street. A 54 percent drop in funding for Mister Rogers. A 27 percent drop in funding for NOVA, and a 27 percent drop in funding for the NewsHour, to which millions turn each night for balanced news coverage. And opponents call that "no significant effect"?

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, Congress established two public television programs designed to facilitate education and learning: Ready to Learn, and Ready to Teach. Together, these two programs requested a total of \$49 million for the coming budget year, which they would use to support educational programming like Sesame Street, Reading Rainbow, and Clifford the Big Red Dog. Rather than meet their request, the Appropriations Committee chose to rescind all 2006 funding from each of these programs, which we established just 3 years ago.

Mr. Chairman, these cuts are unwise. Entire generations of children have grown up watching Big Bird and Snuffleupagus; entire generations have learned to love books while reading along with LeVar Burton; entire generations have been taught to follow their dreams by Mister Fred Rogers and his characters. In an age when more and more children are spending more and more time in front of the television, public TV is one of the very last cuts we can afford to make. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, and for all the reasons above, I urge my colleagues to support the Obey-Lowey-Leach amendment, and to restore full funding to the CPB.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in absolute opposition to the proposed appropriation cuts to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The CPB has been funding, great American treasures including PBS and National Public Radio, free of political influence or favoritism. These entities have become staples of society and to cut or diminish their badly needed funding is plainly, wrong.

Mr. Chairman, during a time in which this body claims to be the saviors of family values, I find it odd that it chooses to undermine public broadcasting, which truly embodies family values and clean programming.

The television and radio can be a precarious place for young and impressionable minds.

Much of what is sent over the airwaves is unsafe for the development children. The excessive violence and sex that is often found on TV is alarming to parents who are constantly looking for a viable alternative to the negative influences prevalent on television.

Mr. Speaker, PBS has been that oasis and refuge for families. Its educational and wholesome programming allows parents and children alike, to watch shows that place an em-

phasis on the positive aspects of American culture. Too often modern entertainers glorify the worst of our society and it is imperative that we counter that influence with the positive shows found on PBS and NPR.

I urge my colleagues here today to rise up in support of CPB, wholesome broadcasting and family values by rejecting these cuts to CPB.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Chairman, for years, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting has provided countless Americans of all ages with high-quality, innovative programming.

But today, House Republicans have renewed their efforts against public broadcasting by reducing funding to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting by \$100 million. That is a 25 percent reduction in funding and would have a devastating effect on public television and public radio. If enacted, public broadcasting stations in Kansas City, Missouri serving my Congressional District would stand to lose over half a million dollars.

As a former radio talk show host on KCUR, the Kansas City affiliate of National Public Radio, I understand the importance of public broadcasting. These days, commercial television and radio provides us with more information about the runaway bride than the runaway budget, and more about the Desperate Housewives than the desperate lives of those whose Medicaid has been cut. Public broadcasting has, for over 40 years, provided the American people with the type of excellent educational, cultural and news programming that is rarely found on television. Whose children didn't grow up watching Big Bird, Arthur, or Clifford?

We cannot afford to lose this important national resource. So today, I will vote in favor of the Obey-Lowey-Leach amendment to restore the \$100 million that was cut from public broadcasting. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Obey-Lowey-Leach amendment to H.R. 3010. This amendment would restore \$100 million that was cut from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in subcommittee earlier this month. Public broadcasting is important for small communities across the country, even all the way out in the U.S. Territory of Guam. Small public broadcasting stations like KGTF Channel 12 in Guam are an important avenue for expression of local identity and community discussion.

I am particularly concerned that the proposed cuts to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) may disproportionately affect the CPB's commitment to quality programming for minority communities through the National Minority Consortia. For example, Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC), which primarily receives its funding from CPB, develops Pacific Island media content and talent that leads to a deeper understanding of Pacific Island history, culture, and contemporary issues. Without continued funding from CPB, PIC would be unable to produce meaningful programs like Dances of Life or The Meaning of Food that have given indigenous communities in the Pacific a voice in our national conversation on race and culture. This August, PIC will be conducting a filmmaking workshop in Guam to build a greater capacity for cultural expression in the video medium.

As KGTF celebrates its 35th year broadcasting in Guam, I hope to be able to tell them

that the future looks bright for public broadcasting and that Congress is appreciative and supportive of their excellent work. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this amendment and restore funding to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. GILLMOR). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) will be postponed.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I do so to try to report to the House what is happening with respect to a unanimous consent request.

The gentleman from Ohio (Chairman REGULA) announced to the House earlier, and I concurred, that we are trying to make an attempt to get the House out today. We indicated that would require a lot of cooperation from both sides.

I think everyone understands how this bill is going to wind up. Much as I detest this bill and will vote against it, it is not going to be changed very much between now and the time it finally reaches final passage. No amount of fixing can fix this bill, in my view, because of the inadequate allocation.

The problem we have is that despite the gentleman from Ohio's (Mr. REGULA) best efforts and my best efforts and that of our staffs, at this point, there are still some 20 Republican amendments that people seem to be hell-bent on offering, and there are approximately 27 Democratic amendments that people seem to be hell-bent on offering.

If all of those amendments are offered, we will have to have at least 6½ hours of debate time. In order to finish today, because of events beyond our control, we have to be finished with debating by 4:30. Obviously, unless we get a much greater sense of give, not only will we be here tomorrow, we will be here a long time tomorrow.

So if Members are serious about wanting to get out today, it would be nice if they recognized that that means that we cannot dispose of 47 amendments in 2 hours.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) makes it very clear. We are trying to eliminate some potential amendments with colloquies, and I hope that some of the Members will consider withdrawing their amendments.

We are making a real effort to try to finish it today; and with cooperation of all the Members, I think this can be accomplished. As the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) points out, I do