

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

The Republican Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill phases out funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) over three years. This action would cut off a key source of support for public television and radio stations throughout the country, as well as for production of many of the award-winning programs they carry..

By law, 70 percent of annual appropriations received by the CPB are provided directly to roughly 1,300 local public television and radio stations to support their programming and operations. On average, CPB grants cover about 15 percent of the budgets of local stations, but this stable funding source is considered a crucial foundation for leveraging support from corporate, foundation, and individual donors.

CPB funds are especially important in rural areas. More than 25 percent of the CPB appropriation went to rural broadcasters in 2010, and CPB grants tend to be a larger share of rural stations' budgets.

Another 19 percent of the CPB appropriation is awarded in grants to support production of some of the high-quality programs broadcast on public television and radio, including children's programs such as *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*, public affairs programming such as the *PBS NewsHour*, and other programs ranging from *Nova* to the films of Ken Burns. (The remainder the CPB budget is used for activities benefitting the public broadcasting system as a whole and for CPB operating expenses.)

Since 1975, the basic appropriation for the CPB has been provided two years in advance. The Republican bill rescinds one-quarter of the advance appropriation previously made for 2013 and one half the advance for 2014, as well as providing no advance appropriation for 2015. As a result, CPB funding would decline from \$445 million in 2012 to \$334 million in 2013, \$223 million in 2014, and zero in 2015.

Blacklisting National Public Radio

The Republican bill also includes language prohibiting any CPB appropriations from being used to acquire programs from or otherwise support National Public Radio (NPR). Congress does not appropriate funds directly to NPR, and only relatively small amounts go directly from the CPB to NPR—all in the form of grants awarded competitively. Rather, most CPB funding that reaches NPR does so when local radio stations use part of their CPB grants to acquire NPR programs for broadcast—programs such as *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, *the Diane Rehm Show*, or *Car Talk*. Under the Republican bill, NPR would be prohibited from competing for CPB grants on the same terms as any other program producer and local stations would be prohibited from using any CPB grant funds for NPR programs.

The draft report approved by the subcommittee offers no rationale or justification for this bizarre and unprecedented interference in local programming decisions and discrimination against one particular producer of radio programs.