

United States Senate

June 3, 2025

The Honorable Patricia de Stacy Harrison
President and Chief Executive Officer
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
401 9th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Ms. Harrison,

Congress has, for decades, trusted the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) with taxpayer funds each year.¹ However, such trust comes with a corresponding obligation of transparency.² We write to request a full accounting from CPB regarding its Editorial Enhancement Grant to National Public Radio (NPR), announced on October 18, 2024.³

In conversations with CPB staff, we learned that CPB first recognized a problem at NPR when Uri Berliner, former senior business editor at NPR, publicly resigned in protest of NPR's editorial bias.⁴ In an attempt to strengthen NPR's editorial operations and ensure the organization "adheres to the highest standards of editorial integrity – accuracy, fairness, balance, objectivity, and transparency, and the obligation to include diverse viewpoints," CPB gave NPR a \$1.9 million "Editorial Enhancement Grant" in October 2024.⁵

CPB staff told Senate staff that the grant money would be spent analyzing qualitative data about the editorial decisions and content NPR produces, guaranteeing NPR produces journalism for a wide audience with a variety of perspectives and voices, and reinforcing the public's trust in NPR. Unfortunately, NPR is failing to live up to the terms of the Editorial Enhancement Grant to such an extent that CPB is reportedly withholding some of the \$1.9 million until NPR improves its editorial bias issue.

On May 21, 2025, staff of Senator Joni Ernst corresponded with CPB, inquiring about the Editorial Enhancement Grant and CPB's evaluation of editorial bias at NPR. However, when pressed for specifics—including the terms of the grant agreement with NPR as well as copies of

¹ *CPB Financial Information*, CPB, <https://cpb.org/aboutcpb/financials> (last visited May 29, 2025).

² *See, e.g.*, 47 U.S.C. § 396(l) (requiring audits, reporting, and public inspection).

³ *CPB Awards \$1.9 Million to NPR for Editorial Enhancement*, CPB, <https://cpb.org/pressroom/CPB-Awards-19-Million-NPR-Editorial-Enhancement> (Oct. 18, 2024).

⁴ Uri Berliner, *I've Been at NPR for 25 Years. Here's How We Lost America's Trust.*, THE FREE PRESS, <https://www.thefp.com/p/npr-editor-how-npr-lost-americas-trust> (Apr. 9, 2024).

⁵ *CPB Awards \$1.9 Million to NPR for Editorial Enhancement*, CPB, <https://cpb.org/pressroom/CPB-Awards-19-Million-NPR-Editorial-Enhancement> (Oct. 18, 2024).

the interim reports NPR has provided to CPB necessitating the withholding of taxpayer funds⁶—CPB staff responded, “I checked with colleagues, and unfortunately I’m not able to share the grant reporting we received due to the terms of our contract with NPR.”⁷

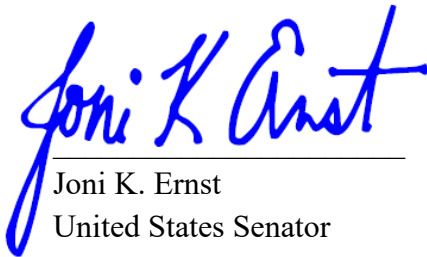
Withholding basic information from Congress about the grants to NPR is unacceptable. It raises doubts about CPB’s commitment to transparency and public accountability. Ultimately, this sort of obstruction when faced with a routine congressional oversight request raises concerns about whether Congress can trust CPB to receive taxpayer funds at all, never mind the robust \$595 million CPB is requesting for Fiscal Year 2027.⁸

We have a constitutional duty to ensure taxpayer dollars are being used in compliance with all applicable laws. Accordingly, please provide the following documents as soon as possible but no later than June 9, 2025:

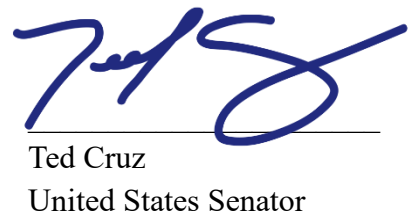
1. A copy of the Editorial Enhancement Grant agreement between CPB and NPR, with redactions in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552; and
2. All submissions, data, analysis, summaries, measurements, or similar documents which CPB has used to evaluate NPR’s compliance with the terms of the Editorial Enhancement Grant.

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of our offices with any questions.

Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator

⁶ Staff agreed that CPB could redact potentially sensitive information such as personally identifiable information (PII) from any documents provided.

⁷ Email from CPB Staff to Senator Ernst staff (May 21, 2025) (on file with Sen. Ernst’s Office).

⁸ CPB’s *Federal Appropriation Request & Justification*, CPB, <https://cpb.org/appropriation> (last visited May 29, 2025).