GEORGIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY AGENCY

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JAMES C. STALLINGS
DIRECTOR

Georgia Association of Broadcasters **June 6, 2023**
6 W Druid Hills Dr NE Suite 330
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Mr. Houghton,
As the Director of the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency I am writing to express my support the AM for Every Vehicle Act. I view continued access to AM radio in vehicles as a public safety issue.

In an era dominated by digital media and streaming services, it's easy to overlook the humble AM radio, particularly in vehicles. However, maintaining AM radio functionality in vehicles is of utmost importance, as it serves as a critical lifeline during emergencies and plays a vital role in disseminating urgent alerts and messaging to the public.

As you know, in recent years eight of the 20 major automakers in the world removed AM radio as an included feature in their vehicles. Maintaining AM radio in vehicles is not just a matter of nostalgia or preserving a legacy technology. Many individuals rely on AM radio as a primary means of receiving news, weather updates, and emergency alerts, especially in rural areas where internet connectivity may be limited. By maintaining AM functionality, we ensure that drivers and passengers can stay informed and make informed decisions, even while on the move.

AM radio has proven its reliability and resilience over the years. Unlike digital platforms that may be susceptible to internet connectivity issues or power outages, AM radio broadcasts can reach a wide audience regardless of these challenges. During emergencies such as natural disasters, severe weather events, or even terrorist attacks, AM radio can function independently, delivering crucial information when other communication channels may be compromised or overloaded.

Another advantage AM radio possesses is the capability to cover vast geographic areas with a single broadcast tower. This wide coverage enables emergency authorities like GEMA/HS to reach a broad audience, ensuring that vital information and instructions are disseminated effectively to those in affected regions. In times of crisis, when every second counts, the ability to reach a large population quickly and efficiently can save lives and minimize the impact of the disaster.

Preserving AM radio in vehicles also promotes inclusivity and accessibility. Not everyone has access to or can afford the latest digital devices or streaming services, and some individuals may rely solely on their car radio for news and emergency information. By recognizing the importance of AM radio in vehicles, we uphold the principles of equal access to information, ensuring that all members of society have a reliable means of staying connected during emergencies.

With its proven reliability, wide coverage, trusted reputation, and inclusivity, AM radio continues to play a vital role in providing emergency alerts and messaging to the public. Maintaining this vital resource in vehicles helps us safeguard lives through our entire community and promotes a well-informed society. We urge Congress to enact legislation protecting citizens' access to AM radio to ensure they are able to receive the right information, at the right time, to make the right decisions to safeguard their lives and property.

Sincerely,

James C. Stallings
Director, GEMA/HS

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