



Broadcasters Successful Thus Far In Spectrum Battle

Gordon H. Smith, NAB President & CEO



Gordon Smith

Broadcasters from around the country stepped up to send a very powerful message to Congress over the past two weeks. The result? Harmful spectrum language was never included in House Speaker John Boehner's (OH-08) debt ceiling legislation and was stripped from Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's (NV) debt ceiling legislation. Congratulations on this outstanding demonstration of grassroots strength!

Since July 15, radio and television stations joined together in airing NAB's spectrum spots more than 50,000 times, contributing an enormous amount of ad inventory to protect local TV. Your message to listeners and viewers was clear: Don't let Congress harm local TV. They heard you and took action, driving more than 100,000 calls and emails to Capitol Hill offices. In addition, The Future of TV website has received more than 100,000 visits in two weeks.

But while we have succeeded in protecting local television thus far, the battle is far from over. The debt ceiling bill establishes a bipartisan congressional committee tasked with recommending spending cuts to achieve about \$1.8 trillion in additional deficit reduction over ten years. The special committee would be required to report its recommendations by late November, upon which Congress must vote by December 23.

Between this committee and the stand alone legislation addressing spectrum, we must continue to be vigilant on this issue this fall when Congress returns. But for now, everyone should be extremely proud of the work America's broadcasters have accomplished together to ensure a strong future for free, local television.

We are extremely grateful at radio and TV stations' willingness to come together and deliver a powerful message to policymakers that we have no reservations about using our medium to educate our audience if government regulations threaten our ability to serve our listeners and viewers. Working together, we can ensure that unnecessary government intervention doesn't affect local stations' ability to innovate and serve their communities.