



April 7, 2020

FROM: Ted Krichels and Kathy Merritt

SUBJECT: CPB CARES Act Advisory Group

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, Congress has appropriated \$75 million in emergency funds to CPB for the public media system. Specifically, Congress directed that the funds be used to maintain programming and services and to preserve the ability of small and rural public media stations to continue to provide essential information, educational content and services to the American people.

At the end of March, following enactment of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), CPB moved quickly to assemble an Advisory Group of system representatives to help inform the development of a plan for the distribution to the public media system of any funds received under the Act. CPB's goal is to have an approved plan in place prior to the CPB Board meeting on April 27 that will allow us to move funds quickly to CSG grantees, upon receipt of the funds from the Treasury Department.

The Advisory Group listed below includes general managers from public radio and television stations (most with past CPB CSG consultation experience), representatives from national organizations, and other public media stakeholders. CPB convened the first Advisory Group meeting on April 2, 2020, and a second meeting of the Group on Monday, April 6, 2020.

During the initial meeting, CPB briefed the Advisory Group on the status of CPB's request for the funds from the Treasury Department, the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) role in this process, timing and the possibility of a hold or rescission of the funds. CPB also discussed the process for adopting a distribution plan, including the role of the CPB Board of Directors. CPB and the Advisory Group discussed the language and intent of the Act, the financial and operating challenges (and opportunities) presented by the current environment to the public media system as a whole, and to public television and radio stations by size, licensee type, geographic location, audience and service.

The Advisory Group further discussed broad goals for the distribution of the funds, as well as discrete issues, such as how CPB defines a "small" radio and television grantee, and the definition of "rural" as set forth in CPB's Radio and Television CSG policies.[\[1\]](#) In addition, the Group began to consider various scenarios for the distribution of funds received under the CARES Act.

During the second meeting, CPB and the Advisory Group discussed a set of principles, including

speed and completeness of distribution, simplicity in terms of allocation method, size and meaningfulness of amounts distributed; and the ability to easily explain the distribution plan to all audiences. The Group then returned to a discussion of various distribution scenarios, including hybrid versions of scenarios presented at the initial meeting.

A third meeting of the Advisory Group is scheduled for Thursday, April 9. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled as needed. We will be updating the public media system regarding the adoption of a plan and a timeline of, and details regarding its implementation.

Participant Name	Title	Organization
Steve Bass	CEO	Oregon Public Broadcasting
Jim Dunford	SVP, PBS Station Services	PBS
Gemma Hooley	SVP, Member Partnerships	NPR
Rachel Hubbard	Executive Director	KOSU (Stillwater, OK)
Sally Kane	CEO	NFCB
Kevin Martin	President and CEO	Ideastream
Greg Petrowich	President and CEO	WFYI
Ron Pisaneschi	General Manager	Idaho PBS
Bill Sanford	CEO/Director of Engineering	Lakeland PBS
Tom Thomas	Co-CEO	Station Resource Group
Lonna Thompson	EVP, COO, General Counsel	APTS

[1] **Definition of Small** (*not based on CSG policy*): Small **Radio** Grantee: CSG grantees with total revenue ≤ \$500K annually; Total Revenue of rural and minority grantees ≤ \$3 million annually; Small **TV** Grantee: CSG grantees with total revenue ≤ \$5 million annually. **Definition of Rural** (*based on CSG Policy endorsed by CPB Board*): Rural **Radio** Grantee: the coverage area population has ≤ 40 people per square kilometer; Rural **Television** Grantee: coverage area population that is > 19% rural. (National average of rural is 19.3%).



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