

# Public Service Media

## A Commitment to Localism

**Education | Public Safety | Civic Leadership**

February 2019

**America's public television stations are committed to three public service missions: education, public safety and civic leadership.**

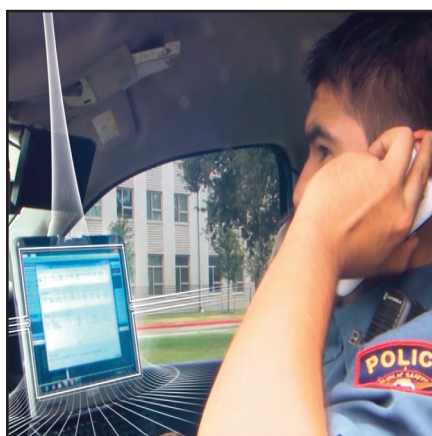
As the last locally-controlled media in America, reaching nearly 97 percent of the American people, public television stations are uniquely positioned to provide these essential services — not only on television but in the classroom, online, as part of the emergency response network and in the community.

The federal investment in public television is essential to making these public services available to everyone, everywhere, every day, for free. And the American people agree: majorities of Republicans, Democrats and independents support federal funding for public television and consider it the best use of taxpayer resources after national defense.

## Local Public Media Stations:

**Addressing Critical Community Needs with  
Local Resources and Unique National Partnerships.**

- ◆ Educating people of all ages.
- ◆ Protecting the public from danger.
- ◆ Strengthening local communities and our democracy.
- ◆ Earning the support of Americans across the political spectrum.





# Funding Requests

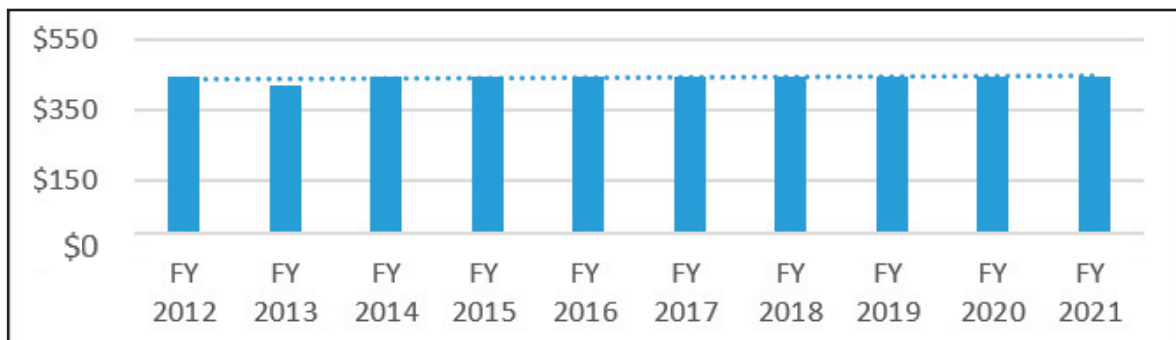
## Corporation for Public Broadcasting

FY 2019 Appropriated: \$445 million for FY 2021

FY 2020 Request: \$495 million for FY 2022

The annual federal investment in public media through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) is the foundation for an extraordinary array of community services in education, public safety and civic leadership that enhance the lives of millions of Americans, beyond the iconic national programming for which public broadcasting is best known.

Yet these vital community-based services have been level-funded at \$445 million a year for the past ten years – resulting in an approximate 10% loss in purchasing power. While a testament to the bipartisan support for public television during a decade of budgetary challenge, CPB funding, when adjusted for inflation, is approximately \$50 million less than it was in 2010, placing a significant strain on local stations' ability to meet community-based needs.



The time has come for a much-needed increase in CPB funding.

With increased federal funding, local public television stations would collectively have the ability to teach, protect and make well-informed citizens of millions more Americans.

Exactly how this enhanced investment could improve local community service and benefit more Americans is demonstrated by the types of particularly good work our stations throughout the country are doing in our three pillars of public service: education, public safety and civic leadership.

If every public television station had sufficient resources to invest in more of these services that their colleagues throughout the country have proven effective, the beneficial impact on the American people could be profound – even with a federal investment that still amounts to only about one-hundredth of one percent of the federal budget.

Americans across the political spectrum support federal funding for public media. Majorities of Democrats, independents, Republicans and Trump voters support maintaining or increasing the federal investment in public media. (*Hart American Viewpoint, 2011 and Morning Consult, December 2016*).

Increasing the federal investment in a program that has worked so well for so long, and has the potential to do so much more for so many, is sound public policy.



# Funding Requests

## Interconnection Funding

FY 2019 Appropriated: \$20 million

FY 2020 Request: \$20 million



The public television interconnection system connects the 161 public television licensees to PBS, other national public television distributors, State and regional public television networks, and individual producers to distribute television programming and related materials.

The interconnection system covers all 50 States, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories, making it essential to public television's work supporting national alert and warning communications.

## Ready To Learn

FY 2019 Appropriated: \$27.7 million

FY 2020 Request: \$30 million



Ready To Learn uses the power of public television's on-air, online, mobile and on-the-ground educational content and engagement to build science, math and literacy skills of children between the ages of two and eight, especially those from low-income families.

Through their local public television station, nearly 97% of Americans have access to this free content which has been proven to close the achievement gap.

A funding level of \$30 million is requested to further enhance the impact of Ready To Learn created content and the quantity and scope of local station outreach to the kids, families, teachers and schools that need it the most.



# Education

Public television stations are educational institutions committed to lifelong learning for the American people. This work goes beyond the television, tablet or phone screen, begins with the most successful early childhood education ever devised, and continues with unique classroom services and teacher professional development resources, high school equivalency preparation, workforce training and adult enrichment.

- For over 50 years, educational programming for young children, the hallmark of public television, has helped multiple generations get ready to learn in school and succeed in life. This free, universally available content has been proven to close the achievement gap between children from low-income families and their more affluent peers.
- Almost two million teachers and users serving an estimated 40 million students (including homeschoolers) have registered to access tens of thousands of digital resources available through PBS LearningMedia. This partnership between PBS and local stations adapts public television programming — plus content from the Library of Congress, National Archives, NASA and more — to provide State curriculum-aligned, interactive digital learning objects for K-12 classrooms.
- Local public television stations across the country partnered with PBS to bring a first-of-its kind, free PBS KIDS 24/7 channel to their communities — providing kids throughout the country with the highest level of educational programming, any time, over-the-air and streaming. As a result, time spent viewing PBS improved by 86% among low-income families, 58% in broadcast homes and 62% in rural homes.
- Public television brings world-class teachers of specialty subjects to some of the most remote schools in the country through “virtual high schools” operated by stations across the United States.
- Through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s (CPB) American Graduate initiative, public television stations have helped reduce the high school dropout rate to a historic low and are now addressing the skills gap.
- Public television operates the largest nonprofit GED program in the country, helping tens of thousands of second-chance learners get their high school equivalency diplomas.
- Public television stations are leaders in workforce development, including the retraining of American veterans by providing digital learning opportunities for training, licensing, continuing education credits and more.
- Public television enriches the lives of everyone, everywhere, every day, for free, with the best history, science, cultural and public affairs programming on the air.

## Educational Impact by the Numbers

- 72% of all kids ages 2-8 (20 million children) watched PBS KIDS last year.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics points to PBS KIDS as a leading resource for educational programming.
- When PBS LearningMedia resources were integrated into existing curriculum, on average, students outperformed national assessment norms by 10 percentage points.
- More than 33,000 homeschoolers use PBS LearningMedia.
- PBS stations reach more kids ages 2-8, more moms with young children and more children from low-income families than any other kids TV network.



# Public Safety

Public broadcasters have advanced their public safety mission and are focused on maximizing the broadcast spectrum and infrastructure for the public good. Public television stations are partnering with federal, State and local public safety, law enforcement and first responder organizations — connecting these agencies with one another, with the public and with lifesaving datacasting services.

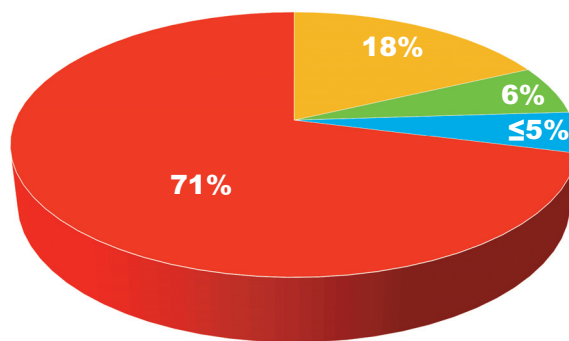
## ***Datacasting***

- America's Public Television Stations have partnered with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to offer local first responders datacasting services that use the broadcast spectrum to help first responders send critical information and video to each other during times of crisis.
- Through these datacasting partnerships, public television stations are able to customize their infrastructure and broadcast spectrum to securely transmit essential encrypted information to responders in the field in real-time without the capacity constraints of traditional mobile or broadband delivery.
- The Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate has conducted several successful pilots throughout the country that, in addition to other local initiatives, demonstrate the effectiveness of public television datacasting in a range of use cases, including:
  - flood warning and response
  - enhanced 911 responsiveness
  - over-water emergency communications
  - faster early earthquake warnings
  - multiagency interoperability
  - rural search and rescue
  - high-profile, large event crowd control
  - assistance with school safety including in areas that lack broadband and LTE services
- Public television datacasting would be a valuable complement to the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). Public television stations have committed 1 Megabit per second of spectrum to support FirstNet.

## ***Emergency Alerts***

- Public television has partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system that enables cell subscribers to receive geo-targeted text messages in the event of an emergency — reaching them wherever they are in times of crisis.
- This same digital infrastructure provides the backbone for emergency alert, public safety, first responder, and homeland security services in many States and communities, including many local stations that serve as their States' primary Emergency Alert Service (EAS) hub for severe weather and AMBER alerts.

## Statutory Funding Formula for CPB



### **Grants to Local Stations**

71%: Grants to local stations in the form of Community Service Grants (CSGs) for the creation of local programming and service initiatives.

### **Grants for Programming**

18%: Grants to producers and national distributors for the creation of programming with an emphasis on educational programming and serving underserved audiences.

### **System Support**

6%: System Support including research and national initiatives and copyright fees.

### **CPB Operations**

Not more than 5%: For CPB operations and administration.



# Civic Leadership



Public television regards its viewers as citizens rather than consumers.

As some of the last locally controlled and operated media, public television is deeply committed to localism and content that reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve. Public television stations help citizens and communities understand the issues they face locally and regionally — enabling them to develop solutions based on facts and rooted in community partnerships.

Public television's commitment to thorough and thoughtful historical and public affairs programming provides all Americans with a better understanding of our country and its place in the world.

- Local public television stations serve as the “C-SPAN” of many State governments, providing access to the State legislative process, Governors’ messages, court proceedings and more.
- Public television provides more community public affairs programming, more local history and culture, more candidate debates, more specialized agricultural news, more community partnerships to deal with issues of concern like veterans’ affairs, and more civic information of all kinds than anyone else in the media universe.
- Through such programming as *American Experience*, *American Masters*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Frontline* and the works of Ken Burns, public television tells the story of America more thoroughly and authoritatively than anyone else in the media world.
- President Ronald Reagan hailed Ken Burns as “the preserver of the national memory,” and Mr. Burns has often said he could not do his work anywhere but in public television.

## Did You Know?

- Nearly 97% of Americans are served by a local public television station.
- The cost of public broadcasting is about \$1.35 per American, per year.
- For the 16th consecutive year, public television has been named #1 in public trust among American institutions in a nationwide annual survey.
- Public television has been ranked the second best use of taxpayer dollars (behind only military defense) for the 16th year in a row.
- The Government Accountability Office has found that there is no substitute for federal funding to ensure universal service for public television.



# Ready To Learn

Ready To Learn uses the power of public television's on-air, online, mobile and on-the-ground educational content and engagement to build science, math and literacy skills of children between the ages of two and eight, especially those from low-income families.

First authorized in 1992, and most recently reauthorized in 2015 as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Ready To Learn is a competitive grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Ready To Learn investments have supported the production and academic rigor of PBS KIDS series: *Peg+Cat*, *SuperWHY!*, *Martha Speaks*, *Odd Squad* and other iconic programming for children.

But this investment in programming is only the beginning. Ready To Learn leverages a national-local partnership among CPB, PBS and local public television stations that helps teachers and caregivers make the most of these media resources locally — including online and mobile apps as well as television — in schools, preschools, homeschools, Head Start and other daycare centers, libraries, mobile learning labs, Boys and Girls Clubs and community centers.

Ready To Learn has proven to be particularly helpful to preschool age students from low-income communities who have access to Ready To Learn's innovative learning tools and targeted on-the-ground outreach.

## READY TO LEARN ACCOUNTABILITY

Ready To Learn's science, math and literacy content is rigorously tested and evaluated to assess its impact on children's learning. Since 2005, more than 100 research and evaluation studies have shown that Ready To Learn literacy and math content engages children, enhances their early learning skills and allows them to make significant academic gains, helping bridge the achievement gap.

## READY TO LEARN HAS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT

The success and value of Ready To Learn has been broadly recognized. This bipartisan support was especially visible during the program's reauthorization in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Ready To Learn is a federal grant program that has worked — and worked very well — exactly as it was intended to, with well-documented results that prove its enormous value to all American children.

## Ready To Learn Quick Facts

- 52% of 3-4 year olds in the U.S. do NOT attend preschool, but nearly 97% of Americans have access to Ready To Learn television content through public television.
- Approximately 14 million children ages 2 to 11 viewed Ready To Learn television content last year, and more than 8 million children experienced related interactive content and games via the Internet, smartphones, tablets and interactive whiteboards.
- Ready To Learn content improves early math and literacy skills.
  - 14% increase in knowledge of numbers, operations and algebraic thinking
  - 25% increase in skip counting
  - 21% increase in naming letters
  - 37% increase in letter sounds



# CPB Advance Funding

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) annual two-year advance appropriation is an essential part of public television's success in providing exceptional local service and pursuing its public service missions of education, public safety and civic leadership.

President Gerald Ford first proposed an advanced-funding mechanism for CPB in 1976 to insulate programming decisions from political influence. Congress reduced President Ford's request from a five-year advance to a two-year advance and has maintained this advanced-funding regime for over 40 years, with excellent results.

At the national programming level, producers such as Ken Burns work with very long lead times to develop the educational programming that the American people value so highly. In coming years, public television will broadcast Ken Burns' specials and series on the history of country music, epic biographies on Ernest Hemingway and Muhammad Ali, and the American Revolution.

It would be impossible to produce such programs, and create the standards-based, curriculum-aligned educational components that accompany them, without the assurance of advance funding, which also helps stations create local programs and services to tie into these national productions.

At the local level, CPB advance funding is essential to stations' ability to leverage the federal investment to attract six times as many resources from State, local and private contributions to support our education, public safety and civic leadership missions.

## Interconnection Funding

For more than 20 years Congress has provided separate, multi-year funding for public broadcasting's interconnection systems — the backbone of public broadcasting.

The public television interconnection system connects the 161 public television licensees to PBS, other national public television distributors, State and regional public television networks, and individual producers to distribute television programming and related materials.

The interconnection system covers all 50 States, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories, making it essential to public television's work supporting national alert and warning communications.

In FY 2018, while in the process of updating the interconnection system from a satellite to terrestrial based system, Congress moved to an annual appropriation to allow for dynamic upgrades as advances in technology are realized.

We greatly appreciate that Congress continues to support this critical infrastructure. Annual funding for the updating and maintenance of this system ensures public television service remains available for free to nearly all Americans, particularly those in the most rural and remote regions.

The most recent upgrade to the interconnection system currently underway will allow for greater collaborations among stations — enhancing partnership opportunities for programming, education and public safety initiatives.

