

TED CRUZ, TEXAS, CHAIRMAN

JOHN THUNE, SOUTH DAKOTA ROGER F. WICKER, MISSISSIPPI DEB FISCHER, NEBRASKA JERRY MORAN, KANSAS DAN SULLIVAN, ALASKA MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE TODD YOUNG, INDIANA TED BUDT, NORTH CAROLINA ERIC SCHMITT, MISSOURI JOHN CURTIS, UTAH BERNIE MOORE, OHIO TIM SHEEHY, MONTANA SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, WEST VIRGINIA CYNTHIA M. LUMMIS, WYOMING	MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS GARY C. PETERS, MICHIGAN TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS JACKY ROSEN, NEVADA BEN RAY LUJAN, NEW MEXICO JOHN W. HICKENLOOPER, COLORADO JOHN FETTERMAN, PENNSYLVANIA ANDY KIM, NEW JERSEY LISA BLUNT RITCHIE, DELAWARE
---	--

BRAD GRANTZ, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
LILA HARPER HELMS, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125
WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

September 24, 2025

Christopher S. Ripley
President and CEO
Sinclair Broadcast Group, Inc.
10706 Beaver Dam Road
Hunt Valley, Maryland 21030

Dear Mr. Ripley:

I write to express my concerns regarding your decision to continue preempting *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* from KOMO-TV in Seattle and your affiliate stations across the country. The First Amendment ensures the freedom of expression and a free press, and our nation's media landscape needs to embody those ideals. As a trusted voice in the community, local broadcasting is a critical part of that landscape. Your decision not to reinstate comedian Jimmy Kimmel's late-night talk show appears contrary to the inherently local aspects of your station licenses, given the popularity of Mr. Kimmel's show in the market. I urge you to return Mr. Kimmel's show to KOMO-TV.

Last week, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr appeared on a podcast and threatened Disney/ABC and its affiliates with retribution if they did not stop airing Kimmel's show. Hours later, Nexstar, the largest broadcast station group, announced it would preempt Mr. Kimmel's show effective immediately on its 32 ABC affiliate stations; ABC announced an indefinite suspension of Mr. Kimmel's show shortly thereafter. Following ABC's announcement, Sinclair then issued its own statement declaring that ABC's suspension is "not enough" before proceeding with the preemption of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* from your 39 affiliates, as well as a list of demands, including an apology and monetary donation from Mr. Kimmel to the Kirk Family, before returning his show to your stations.¹ Now, even as ABC returned Mr. Kimmel's show to the airwaves last night, Sinclair continues to preempt while conversations with ABC are ongoing.² This meant that my constituents who live in the Seattle Designated Market Area (DMA)—more than 5 million people—were unable to watch Mr. Kimmel's show on KOMO last night.

¹ Sinclair, Sinclair Says Kimmel Suspension is Not Enough, Calls on FCC and ABC to Take Additional Action (Sept. 17, 2025)

<https://sbgi.net/sinclair-says-kimmel-suspension-is-not-enough-calls-on-fcc-and-abc-to-take-additional-action/>.

² Sinclair, Inc., X, <https://x.com/WeAreSinclair/status/1970266039532306593> (Sept. 22, 2025).

Broadcast licensees can—and do—decide what programming to air in their communities of license. Licensees also choose to enter into affiliate agreements with national networks, such as ABC.

Your ABC affiliate in Seattle, KOMO-TV, is one of the most popular stations in the area, and ratings for *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* are higher in the Seattle DMA than the national average. I am concerned that your decision, made on a national level, will negatively impact how millions of viewers in the Puget Sound region access quality, local news, and programming. And while viewers may still be able to access *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* through ABC and Disney's streaming platforms, the next day, this puts content behind a paywall. Local broadcast programming must be available over-the-air to ensure widespread access to local news and information. I know we share this goal.

I urge you to listen to your community of license and return *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* to KOMO-TV.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation