

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

June 23, 2023

Mr. Sebastian Mackensen
Chief Executive Officer
BMW of North America, LLC
300 Chestnut Ridge Road
Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07675

Dear Mr. Mackensen,

As you may be aware, Ford announced last month that it would maintain AM radio on all 2024 Ford and Lincoln vehicles. Amid the public outcry over some automakers removing AM radio from electric vehicles, Ford's decision is a welcome, albeit incomplete, development. As the lead authors of the AM for Every Vehicle Act, we ask that you follow Ford's lead and make a similar commitment to maintain broadcast AM radio in your company's current and future vehicle models, including electric vehicles (EVs).

AM radio plays a critical role in the lives of millions of Americans who rely on it for local news, weather alerts, sports, music, and entertainment. It is also a prominent platform for talk radio, which is a home for a variety of viewpoints and diverse audiences, including Hispanic, Black, and other minority communities. AM radio also serves a unique role in rural and agricultural areas. In some parts of the country, especially those without broadband connectivity, AM radio is one of the public's only choices to stay informed.

Additionally, AM radio is a vital means of emergency communication. Seven bipartisan former FEMA administrators recently wrote that removing the capability to receive AM broadcast signals from automobiles could undermine public safety.¹ AM radio covers a wider geographical area than FM radio signals or cell towers and it continues to reliably function during hurricanes, tornadoes, or other severe weather events when other communication networks may face outages. With forty percent of listeners tuning in from their cars, maintaining access to AM radio in vehicles is essential to ensure safety alerts can reach the public.

You previously indicated that your company will discontinue free AM broadcast radio service. We urge your firm to reconsider any plans to remove AM radio from your vehicles. Preserving AM radio not only aligns with the growing recognition of its significance but also demonstrates a commitment to public safety and meeting consumer expectations. We request that you respond

¹ Ryan Felton, *Electric Vehicles Need AM Radio, Former Emergency Officials Argue*, Wall Street Journal, February 27, 2023: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/electric-vehicles-need-am-radio-former-emergency-officials-argue-9e69e297>

to this letter with a commitment to keep AM radio in all your new vehicles. Please provide a written response regarding your commitment by July 7, 2023.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing about your continued commitment to AM broadcast radio.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Edward Markey
United States Senator