

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 223 Session of 2024

INTRODUCED BY BAKER, DUSH, ROTHMAN, COSTA, KANE, CAPPELLETTI, BREWSTER, CULVER, DILLON, SCHWANK AND J. WARD, FEBRUARY 12, 2024

SENATOR PENNYCUICK, COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY, AS AMENDED, APRIL 30, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AND THE National <--
2 Highway Traffic Safety Administration to make a rule
3 requiring automakers to maintain free, broadcast AM radio in
4 all vehicles.

5 WHEREAS, There are approximately 164 AM radio stations across
6 Pennsylvania, with signals that reach farther than any other;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, More than 80 million Americans tune into free, local
9 AM radio stations each month for news, sports or entertainment;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, AM radio serves as the backbone of the Emergency
12 Alert System which warns the public of pending danger and is
13 therefore a critical source of information in times of
14 emergency; and

15 WHEREAS, AM radio stations play a crucial role serving as the
16 vast majority of primary entry points across the country,
17 designated radio stations whose signals cover 90% of the
18 American population and have a direct connection to the Federal

1 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Pennsylvania Emergency  
2 Management Agency (PEMA) and the National Weather Service; and

3 WHEREAS, FEMA relies on AM radio stations to ensure that the  
4 President can communicate to Americans when major public safety  
5 or national security events occur and has invested tens of  
6 millions of dollars to "harden" these radio stations to  
7 withstand "All Hazards," including chemical, biological,  
8 radiological, high-altitude electro-magnetic pulse and nuclear  
9 attacks; and

10 WHEREAS, According to FEMA, these hardened stations provide  
11 the nation's "last resort mass communications capabilities under  
12 all conditions"; and

13 WHEREAS, FEMA further states, "In the aftermath of a  
14 national, catastrophic event ... broadcast radio may be the most  
15 effective method [of transmitting crucial information to the  
16 public] since it is possible that terrestrial Internet Protocol  
17 networks and other pathways could be inoperable, especially at  
18 'last mile' delivery to the public"; and

19 WHEREAS, When power goes out and the Internet goes down,  
20 radio remains the most resilient form of communication,  
21 especially in vehicles during power outages; and

22 WHEREAS, AM radio uniquely can reach listeners in a wide  
23 geographic area and is available in urban and rural areas,  
24 regardless of Internet access and without paid subscriptions;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, AM radio plays a vital role in serving minority,  
27 non-English-speaking and other underrepresented communities with  
28 free, in-language and religious programming; and

29 WHEREAS, AM radio is highly important to rural and farming  
30 communities, providing weather updates, crop reports and other

1 information to farmers and ranchers; and

2 WHEREAS, Removing AM radio from vehicles ignores the critical  
3 safety benefits of AM radio and would deprive many listeners of  
4 this lifesaving emergency information and put public safety at  
5 risk; and

6 WHEREAS, Including AM radio in electric vehicles is neither  
7 especially costly nor technically complex to achieve, as  
8 evidenced by the large number of electric vehicle manufacturers  
9 that include AM radio in their vehicles; therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the ~~House of Representatives urge the~~ SENATE <--  
11 URGE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AND THE National  
12 Highway Traffic Safety Administration to make a rule requiring  
13 automakers to maintain free, broadcast AM radio in all vehicles.