

March 17, 2008

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Vivian Schiller, President and CEO
National Public Radio
635 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Ms. Schiller:

The leadership of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) is deeply dissatisfied concerning the imminent final airing of "News & Notes" and the related lay offs of several black staff members from NPR.

At a time when leadership by the nation's first black president is drawing greater scrutiny to the disparities the African-American community faces from employment and education to health care, it seems spurious to eliminate programming, voices and leadership that promote coverage of this underserved community.

During economic difficulty when newsrooms are losing journalists across the country, it is even more important that media organizations ensure they are not losing diversity. We feel as though the cancellation of "News & Notes" and the lay offs of several black journalists employed by NPR balks at the organization's efforts to appeal to new listeners and disseminate varying perspectives.

Diversity is good for business. How will NPR demonstrate a commitment to making sure African-American journalists do not lose ground?

As NPR makes difficult financial decisions to ensure its future stability, know that NABJ is committed to helping our members survive and thrive in this evolving multimedia landscape. We are offering unprecedented training and would like to know how we can work with you to keep our members competitive and more valuable than ever to NPR and its listeners.

Sincerely,



Barbara Ciara
President