

SUBJ: ICYMI – Briefing Details the Real Impacts of the Proposed AM Radio Mandate

In case you missed it, the Zero Emission Transportation Association (ZETA), the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), and the Alliance For Automotive Innovation (the Alliance) had a packed room last week for a briefing on the technological realities of the AM radio mandate. Technical experts like Rivian's Senior Manager of Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Engineering helped tackle many of the misconceptions about AM radio and electric vehicles (EV).

**The panel debunked the myths about this mandate, explaining how it DOES NOT ...**

- **Meaningfully improve public safety:** Drivers on the road already have access to the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) through several sources beyond analog AM radio. IPAWS includes maximum redundancies over multiple mediums, including digital and analog AM and FM radio, internet-based radio, satellite radio, and cellular networks.
 - Analog AM radio is but one layer of IPAWS and is unlikely to be relied upon, as illustrated by CTA's [survey](#) following the October 2023 nationwide emergency alert system test. Results show that 95% of Americans received the alert via phone, and only 1% received it via AM radio.
- **Support FEMA's modernization efforts:** The *IPAWS Modernization Act of 2015* directed IPAWS to, among other things, adapt to and incorporate future technologies for communicating directly with the public, provide alerts to the largest portion of the affected population feasible, and improve the ability of remote areas to receive alerts. Forcing continued reliance on outdated technologies would directly conflict with the intent of the legislation.
- **Or improve access to AM Radio Programming:** The EV models targeted by this mandate already offer superior access to AM programming via digital and satellite services that offer radio programming nationwide. It's also important to note that AM radio listenership has been trending downward for decades, as noted by [FEMA](#) and the [FCC](#).

The panel also discussed the ways that such a mandate WILL ...

- **Further complicate the EV rollout:** It fails to provide meaningful improvements to the nation's emergency preparedness and response systems. It does not increase access to AM radio programming or address other real consumer demands. Despite any rational benefits, automakers will be forced to undertake costly redesigns to standards not currently defined in the legislation, leading to billions in losses for manufacturers – losses which are especially harmful for small manufacturers in the industry.
 - Panelists raised the National Association of Broadcasters' own comments to the Federal Communications Commission which [stated](#), "There is no rational basis for viewing improvements in technology as an excuse for regulation; indeed, doing so would be a perverse disincentive for broadcaster adoption of new technologies and would not serve the public interest."
- **And attack American innovation:** Never before has Congress mandated a communications technology, and it certainly has never mandated a technology without any sort of sunset provision. This would force an innovative sector to not only include comparatively outdated technology in its vehicle but also negatively impact critical aspects of the driving experience (i.e. added weight impacts range) without providing any tangible benefits. The mandate not only discourages American ingenuity, but poses a serious threat to innovation for future models of American-made vehicles.

ZETA, CTA, and the Alliance are committed to working with lawmakers on this issue, whether it be through educational briefings or discussing alternative text that would require a study first before issuing a mandate in perpetuity. Please look to us as a resource as Congress considers this legislation.

If you want to learn more, please reach out to leilani@zeta2030.org. We send our thanks to everyone who made this briefing possible and stand ready to answer any questions that you or your boss may have about this unnecessary and unfunded mandate.

