

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2019

Grant Turner
Interim Chief Executive Officer and Director
U.S. Agency for Global Media
330 Independence Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20237

Dear Mr. Turner,

We write to express our profound concern regarding information that we have received regarding plans to drastically reduce personnel at the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) through a "Reduction in Force" (RIF) plan. We are also concerned about indications that there may be additional considerations underway to greatly alter OCB's structure, or possibly its location.

As Members that represent constituents employed at OCB, a federal organization located within our district and state, and with a constituency well attuned to U.S.-Cuba policy, we have a responsibility to ensure that OCB is fully equipped and unencumbered in carrying out its essential mission. Congress authorized OCB with overwhelming support through the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act of 1983 (P.L. 98-111) and the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-246). Together, these statutes specifically established the unique and crucial role of OCB. Pursuant to that authorization, the U.S. Congress has continued to solidly fund OCB with appropriations annually since 1985, for a total of \$911 million to date. In addition to robust congressional support, President Trump has made U.S. policy toward Cuba, and outreach to the Cuban people, a priority of his administration. Given OCB's sustained congressional support, statutory mission, and pivotal role in furthering the administration's U.S. foreign policy goals, we are alarmed by reports that major changes may be underway at OCB that could have a detrimental impact on OCB's mission and our constituents. We are especially concerned that neither USAGM nor OCB has kept us informed of these possible changes at any point during the planning stages.

We are committed to doing all we can to ensure that OCB is able to continue its essential mission of piercing the information blockade to bring outside information to the Cuban people. We look forward to working with you to ensure that OCB may continue its important work unimpeded, as fully consistent with U.S. law, Congressional intent, and the Administration's foreign policy goals. We trust that you share that goal, and that you will work to ensure that no harm is caused to this vital agency – harm which may be irreparable.

For these reasons, we respectfully request, within all applicable rules and regulations, that you expeditiously reconsider any "RIF" plans which may be underway, or any other major structural changes or relocations under consideration related to OCB. At a minimum, we explicitly express our full expectation that you will keep us, and all other major stakeholders within the administration and the U.S. Congress, well informed of any similarly considered changes before undertaking further steps.

We thank you for your attention to this matter of utmost importance, and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott
U.S. Senator

cc: Hon. Michael Pompeo, U.S. Secretary of State
Hon. Mick Mulvaney, Acting White House Chief of Staff
Hon. Russell Vought, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget
Emilio Vazquez, Acting Director of the Office of Cuba Broadcasting