

Statement of Congressman Danny K. Davis On House Vote to Bar NPR from Receiving Federal Funds

Statement
of Congressman Danny K. Davis

On House Vote to Bar NPR from Receiving Federal Funds

March 17, 2011

Today's vote to bar National Public Radio from receiving federal funds, contrary to any other allegations, had nothing to do with our budget deficit as the Congressional Budget Office has already determined that the vote would have no effect on the budget. It had nothing to do with guiding NPR into a new business model in the digital age as NPR operates one of the most technically sophisticated operations in the nation.

After many years of bi-partisan agreement to fund NPR on a multi-year basis to prevent that funding from becoming a partisan issue, the House with no hearings, no fact finding, no regard for the myriad of more pressing critical issues facing the American people today turned NPR funding into a political football.

This was a sad day for the Congress. It was a sad day for the public programs that NPR helps to support such as AMBER alert. It was a sad day for the rural communities and small towns which depend on NPR for news and information. It was a sad day for the thousands of jobs at local radio stations endangered by these cuts. It was a sad day for our cherished notion of a populace open to and seeking many points of view.

I cast my NO vote proudly not because I listen to NPR occasionally, which I do, or because I agree with everything public radio says and does, which I don't, but because I believe that public broadcasting has an important role to play in our public discourse. And part of the public in public broadcasting is the very small share of NPR's budget that comes from government support. Those dollars are leveraged many, many times over and the result serves us all.

This effort to defund NPR will not pass in the Senate, the President will not sign it and I hope we can put this issue behind us quickly and move on to critical issues facing our nation, starting with jobs for the millions of Americans still unable to find work.