

July 14, 2026

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Thune, and Leader Schumer:

Across the Atlantic, the European Union is moving to slam shut a door that, in recent years, has been one of the only avenues through which American performers received any form of compensation when our music was played on the radio overseas. Only Congress has the power to keep that door open. We write today to urge that you do so by passing the American Music Fairness Act (H.R.861/S.326) before more of our work is locked out of the global marketplace.

For decades, the United States has stood alongside Cuba, North Korea, and Iran as the only nations on earth that do not pay performers when their music is broadcast on AM/FM radio. Due to this loophole, foreign countries often withhold royalties from American artists under the principle of material reciprocity: if we don't pay their artists, they will not pay ours.

A 2020 ruling by the European Court of Justice temporarily reopened that pipeline, ordering EU member states to pay American performers. But that reprieve may end soon. In recent weeks, the European Commission has initiated steps to restore material reciprocity throughout the continent, meaning that unless Congress acts, American performers could soon be denied payments across the European radio market.

American music remains our country's most successful cultural export. Our songs dominate playlists in Paris, Berlin, Madrid, Stockholm, and Dublin. And yet, because the U.S. stands alone among developed economies in refusing to recognize a performance right on terrestrial radio, more than \$287 million in annual royalties from Europe is now poised to be cut off. That is on top of the hundreds of millions of dollars already withheld from American artists by the rest of the world every year for the same reason.

The good news is that Congress can easily fix this.

The American Music Fairness Act closes the AM/FM radio loophole and requires corporate radio broadcasters to pay artists when they profit from our music, just as streaming services, satellite radio, and digital platforms do.

Every other platform pays for music. Every other developed country pays for music. American AM/FM radio, a multi-billion-dollar industry, still gets to use our work for free.

This is not a controversial issue. The American Music Fairness Act is a balanced, bipartisan proposal that is built to protect what radio does best. Small, local, and community broadcasters would be able to play unlimited music for less than \$2 a day. Public, college, religious, and noncommercial stations are also protected. The bill is narrowly targeted at the giant corporate broadcasters that rake in billions each year in advertising revenue without paying the performers, background vocalists, and session musicians who made those songs possible in the first place. That's why every Democratic and Republican administration in the last 50 years has supported a performance right for sound recordings, and the American people today support this solution by a 6-to-1 margin.

Passing the American Music Fairness Act is a chance to do right by American artists at home and protect the royalties we already receive from Europe. It would also unlock hundreds of millions of dollars from countries that are still refusing to pay Americans. That money belongs to the artists who make up the backbone of our industry. With Europe now seriously considering closing this door, the cost of inaction grows by the day. We urge you to bring the American Music Fairness Act to the floor and pass it without delay.

Thank you for your leadership and your consideration. We look forward to working with you and your staff to finally make U.S. law match the simple promise our work has always carried: when someone plays our music, the artists who created it should get paid.

Sincerely,

Aerosmith	Gloria Estefan	Lisa Loeb
Barbra Streisand	Gloria Gaynor	Mariah Carey
Belinda Carlisle	Hootie & The Blowfish	Master P
Billy Idol	Huey Lewis	MC Lyte
Bonnie Raitt	Jackson Browne	Melle Mel
Boyz II Men	James Taylor	Mickey Guyton
Carly Simon	Jason Aldean	Mike Love
Carole King	Jason Mraz	Mýa
Celine Dion	Jefferson Starship	Nancy Wilson
Cyndi Lauper	Jelly Roll	Peter Frampton
Darius Rucker	Joan Jett	P!nk
Darryl "DMC" McDaniels	Josh Groban	Randy Travis
David Foster	Julian Lennon	R.E.M.
Dee Snider	Katharine McPhee	Sammy Hagar
Def Leppard	Kool and the Gang	Sarah McLachlan
Don McLean	LeAnn Rimes	Smokey Robinson
Duran Duran	Lee Ann Womack	Steve Miller

Foreigner
Gavin Rossdale
Gene Simmons

Lee Greenwood
Lil Jon

TLC
Tori Amos