

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2021-121

REQUESTING THE JOINT PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE STUDY THE OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS, CONTENT SELECTION CRITERIA, AND FUNDING RESTRICTIONS OF ARKANSAS PUBLIC BROADCASTING SERVICE.

WHEREAS, Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service, funded in part with state funding, provides broadcast and streaming services to individuals across Arkansas,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT PROPOSED BY THE JOINT PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Joint Performance Review Committee study Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service, including without limitation an analysis and review of:

(1) The internal controls regarding the review process for any content that generates alerts from the national Public Broadcasting Service and related programming service providers regarding programs that contain material that may be controversial or sensitive;

(2) The individuals or groups involved in making decisions concerning whether to broadcast or remove a program;

(3) The restrictions and controls placed on funding received by Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service from the United States Government;

(4) The legal responsibilities Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service owes to the:
(A) Federal Communications Commission;
(B) Corporation for Public Broadcasting; and
(C) National Public Broadcasting Service based on the existing programming and member station agreement;

(5) The percentage of national Public Broadcasting Service programming that Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service is required to carry;

(6) The data demonstrating the effectiveness of the ability of Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service to reach its intended audience on both televisual and digital platforms;

(7) Data on the effectiveness of Arkansas Internet Delivered Education for Arkansas Schools ("ArkansasIDEAS"), which works with the Department of Education and local school districts to provide statewide online professional development programs, as required by Arkansas Code § 6-17-707;

(8) The number of individuals currently employed by Arkansas Public Broadcasting System and the efficiency of each of those employees;

1 (9) The role of Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service and its broadcast towers as they
2 relate to the public safety warning system, including without limitation the costs associated with the
3 maintenance and upkeep of the broadcast towers;

4 (10) All funding sources for Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service and the amounts
5 received from each funding source;

6 (11) A list of all contracts Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service has with other state
7 entities;

8 (12) The guidelines currently in place for program scheduling; and

9 (13) Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service's coverage of sports, including without
10 limitation:

11 (A) How the decision to cover high school sports in the State of Arkansas was
12 made;

13 (B) Why high school sports were chosen for coverage over other activities and
14 topics;

15 (C) The previous or current existence of market viewership projections;

16 (D) The existence of market research, if any, that may have been conducted on
17 making the decision to cover high school sports, including without limitation associated results and
18 information and the rationale behind this decision;

19 (E) Whether any post-broadcast research has been conducted that
20 substantiates market viewership projections;

21 (F) Whether the marketing plan associated with the coverage of high school
22 sports has changed since its inception based on feedback or other data;

23 (G) Whether Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service established goals and
24 objectives for its high school sports programming, including without limitation:

25 (i) A list of the goals established, if any;

26 (ii) An explanation regarding whether or not the established goals, if any,
27 were previously or have currently been met; and

28 (iii) Success ratings associated with the established goals, if any;

29 (H) Whether achievable benchmarks previously were or have at any point been
30 established to measure the success of high school sports coverage since beginning such coverage,
31 including without limitation whether any established benchmarks have been achieved;

32 (I) What the per-sport projection costs were before Arkansas Public
33 Broadcasting Service began its high school sports coverage, including without limitation:

34 (i) The original documents specifying per-sport projection costs; and

35 (ii) The actual per-sport projection costs before the implementation of
36 high school sports coverage by Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service; and

1 (J) What the per-sports analysis costs and return-on-investment are for sports
2 programming provided by Arkansas Public Broadcasting Service, including whether or not these figures
3 justify the costs associated with providing high school sports coverage.

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5 Respectfully submitted,

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9 Senator Jimmy Hickey, Jr
10 District 11

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14 Senator Dan Sullivan
15 District 21

16 Prepared by: TNL/TNL
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