

MEDIA BILL BRIEFING NOTE

**The Media Bill includes vital safeguards for radio.
It will help ensure radio content is available to audiences in future, as more listening shifts to connected devices like smart speakers.**

PROTECTING THE FUTURE OF RADIO ONLINE

- The Media Bill will help guarantee access to UK radio services on voice-activated smart speakers (such as the Amazon Echo). It's essential for listeners that this legislation is introduced and enacted swiftly.
- Online listening to radio has grown rapidly in the last few years (having doubled since 2019 to a record high of 25%). Radio's greater reliance on tech platforms creates the risk of an abuse of market power – with platforms potentially charging for access to UK radio; pushing listeners to their own radio-like services; or inserting their own advertising messages around UK radio content.
- The Media Bill will help to prevent such anti-competitive behaviours that would present a risk to the long-term sustainability of UK radio and the value provided to your constituents by introducing new powers.
 - **A listeners' station of choice should be reliably provided** in response to a voice command.
 - **Smart speaker platforms should provide unfettered access** (without charging) to radio stations licenced by Ofcom.
 - **Broadcasters can request a default route for their stations** to be delivered to listeners on smart speakers, for example via Global Player, Rayo, BBC Sounds, Radioplayer or Tuneln.
 - **Platforms should not overlaying content** (such as advertising) over the top of radio services.
- Over the summer the cross-party Culture, Media & Sport Select Committee completed its pre-legislative scrutiny of the draft Media Bill. Its [report on radio](#) strongly backed the world-leading measures.

COMMERCIAL RADIO REGULATION

- The Media Bill also includes clauses that reduce regulatory burdens on commercial radio stations, supporting investment by broadcasters in content and the long-term sustainability of the sector, while ensuring the provision of local news and information.

IMPORTANCE OF RADIO

- UK radio listeners are well served by a diverse mix of national, regional and local broadcasters, from commercial radio and the BBC, with **9 out of 10** of the adult population tuning in every week. Broadcasters also make a substantial contribution to the economy and creative industries, with BBC radio and commercial radio combined generating over **£1.5bn in gross value added to the UK economy**.
- Commercial radio stations, which reach over 39 million listeners, are an important source of trusted, reliable news and make a significant investment in journalism across all parts of the UK, broadcasting over **10,000 bulletins** every week and employing **hundreds of journalists**.

NEXT STEPS

Following the [introduction of the Media Bill](#) and its second reading on 21st November, please highlight your support for radio with colleagues as the legislation is in committee stage in order to secure the future of radio online and provide certainty for listeners.