

June 9, 2011

Dear Members of the Kentucky Congressional Delegation:

We are writing to you as members of My Morning Jacket and as proud citizens of Kentucky. As musicians, we are concerned about a number of issues that we, and other contributors to Kentucky's artistic economy, are currently confronting. In order to continue producing original creative work, our community requires access to the Internet and a supportive broadcast media. We are concerned with recent Congressional activity around these crucial platforms and urge you to consider the impact of your decisions on the creative sector.

By way of introduction, we are a musical group formed in 1998 in Louisville, Kentucky. We released our first album the following year. In the ensuing years, our music has been featured in films and television and we have toured the world and played to crowds numbering in the tens of thousands. In May, we released our sixth full-length studio album, *Circuital*. We are happy to report we just learned the album debuted number 5 on the Billboard album charts. To celebrate the release, we have been playing a series of shows around the country and donating a portion of our ticket sales to local charities. We started as a small local band in Louisville and have grown into a successful small business that employs a dozens of people and allows us to tour and sell records throughout the world.

Our ability to build a fan base at home and abroad was – and still is – dependent to a large degree on the Internet. The Internet has changed how musicians connect to their listeners – from online stores, to streaming sites like Pandora and Rhapsody, to social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. These are resources that help us reach our fans and sell our product so that we generate revenue for our employees and ourselves. These outlets are absolutely essential to us and to every working musician today.

Technology (and for that matter, the entire music business) is constantly evolving. We believe it is of paramount importance to preserve the Internet as an engine for creativity and commerce. We think there should be basic rules to ensure that there is a legitimate digital music marketplace for Kentucky's musicians now and going forward. Open access to the web and its innovations is crucial to our band, our community and Kentucky's future artists.

As helpful as Internet technologies are, we still also depend on traditional technologies like radio. In particular, public radio has been a champion of our band and many other Kentucky acts. Having our song played on public radio is essential to the growth of our band and business, and it is essential for thousands of artists that rely on the exposure generated by NPR and non-commercial radio stations. Eliminating funding for public broadcasting would be hugely damaging to working musicians, not to mention having a negative impact on local economies.

It is our belief that funding public broadcasting and maintaining open Internet access are

two essential components in nourishing the vital music scene in the state of Kentucky.

As Kentuckians, musicians, and small business owners, we urge you to preserve the things that are most critical to our ability to make a living from our music: the Internet and non-commercial radio.

Sincerely,
Jim James
Tom Blankenship
Patrick Hallahan
Bo Koster
Carl Broemel