

## H.R. 501 - Fairness and Accountability in Broadcasting Act

H.R. 501, The MEDIA Act (Meaningful Expression of Democracy in America)

### WHY WE NEED THIS LEGISLATION

In 1949, the FCC adopted the Fairness Doctrine to ensure that all coverage of controversial issues by a broadcast station would be fair and balanced. This standard stood until it was repealed by the agency 17 years ago. Since then, public opinion views the content on the nation's airwaves as unbalanced, inaccurate, and unfair.

According to a recent bipartisan national survey conducted for Media Matters for America, likely voters overwhelmingly support rules restoring "balance" and "fairness" on the public airwaves:

"When asked whether television and radio stations that use public airwaves should be required to present the sides of an issue in a reasonably balanced way -- including giving time to opposing points of view -- fully 77% say that they should, and only 17% say that they should not."

### WHAT THIS LEGISLATION WOULD DO

The MEDIA Act would reinstate the Fairness Doctrine for broadcasters holding licenses from the Federal Communications Commission. This change would ensure that broadcasters present discussions of conflicting views on issues of public importance.