



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
SPEECH

Tuesday, 25 November 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Tuesday, 25 November 2014
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Questioner
Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:39): I would like to express my concern about cuts to the ABC and the resulting loss of content. Aside from shedding 400 jobs, the public broadcaster is cutting content, and I am particularly concerned about a loss of great local journalism and TV around the country, particularly in rural and regional Australia. The announcement to close five regional radio outposts at Nowra, Wagin, Morwell, Gladstone, and Port Augusta will have an enormous impact on those towns. These local radio stations are often the lifeline of their towns. They allow residents to connect through storytelling where it is often difficult due to distance.

These types of regional radio stations also provide sometimes lifesaving messages to their communities in disasters. I want to know: what will happen in an emergency once these regional outposts are shut down? How will the people of Nowra or Morwell stay safe in a bushfire this summer?

I still can remember how the ABC, here in Canberra, covered the 2003 bushfire disaster and how the Canberra community turned to a known and trusted source in that time of emergency. That is why I stood on the lawns of Parliament House this afternoon, fighting for a cause I believe in.

Our ABC should be an ABC for all Australians, whether they live in Melbourne, Sydney or Gladstone. They deserve the diversity of local content that only the ABC can offer. Australians have a right to feel betrayed by the Abbott government, and I will continue to highlight its broken promises.