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ECBAWM Helps Secure Order Reinstating Over 500 Voice of America Journalists and Staff Who Were Laid Off by Trump Administration

OCTOBER 7, 2025

On September 29, 2025, a federal judge ordered that the Trump administration reverse recent layoffs issued to nearly all remaining employees at Voice of America (“VOA”), a broadcaster at the United States Agency for Global Media (“USAGM”), as part of a legal challenge filed in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia by ECBAWM, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Government Accountability Project, Democracy Defenders Fund, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), and the Yale Law School Media Freedom and Information Access Clinic.

Despite an April preliminary injunction ordering the administration to restore VOA news coverage, USAGM Acting CEO Kari Lake, a Trump ally and former Arizona Governor and Senate candidate, announced the layoffs of over 500 full-time journalists and support staff at the agency in August. In his latest order halting the layoffs, United States District Judge Royce C. Lamberth wrote that Trump officials’ noncompliance with his April order “has wasted precious judicial time and resources and readily support contempt proceedings.”

In a quote to the New York Times, three of the VOA journalist plaintiffs, Patsy Widakuswara, Kate Neeper, and Jessica Jerreat, jointly stated: “We believe the wholesale silencing of V.O.A. broadcasts and the removal of critical staff and expertise go against what Congress intended” referring to VOA’s statutory mandate to broadcast around the world. ECBAWM is proud to represent the Plaintiffs in their fight against the Trump administration’s arbitrary and unlawful gutting of the federal workforce.

The Plaintiffs are represented by ECBAWM attorneys [Andrew G. Celli, Jr.](#), [Debra L. Greenberger](#), [Nick Bourland](#), and [Dan Eisenberg](#).

Press:

[“Judge Reinstates Over 500 Voice of America Journalists and Staff,” NYTimes](#)

[“Judge suspends Trump administration’s plan to eliminate hundreds of Voice of America jobs,” AP News](#)

[“Judge blocks Kari Lake from laying off over 500 Voice of America staffers,” Washington Post](#)

[“Judge blocks Kari Lake’s planned layoffs for now, suggests case verges on contempt,” AZ Central](#)

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OCTOBER 2, 2025

New York Times Covers ECBAWM's Efforts to Defend Former FBI Agents Illegally Fired Without Cause

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

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JUNE 26, 2025

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