

April 7, 2025

Dear DPA Members,

I extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for your patience, resilience, and commitment to truth-telling as we navigate the rapidly shifting landscape of public media and documentary filmmaking. As your elected leadership, we have been working tirelessly to develop the most effective response to recent executive orders from the White House, as well as legislative actions by Congress, that threaten the funding and sustainability of our industry. The DPA remains steadfast in our dedication to protecting the rights and security of our community.

At the core of our mission is the unwavering belief that freedom of speech and expression are inalienable rights of all people. Documentary filmmaking exists at the intersection of public service and artistic expression, amplifying diverse voices, preserving cultural heritage, and holding power accountable. As such, the continued [erosion of funding for arts organizations](#) jeopardizes not only our ability to tell these essential stories but also the public's fundamental right to access information that informs, educates, and enriches our shared experience.

In light of recent events – including the captivity, torture and release of Hamdan Ballall, Producer/Director of the *No Other Land* documentary – we firmly condemn all forms of violence against journalists and documentary filmmakers, as well as any form of political censorship targeting legitimate journalism, factual reporting, and the responsible exploration of ideas. We encourage and support open dialogue, critical thinking, and collaboration within our extended filmmaking community as we work toward collective action to ensure the safety, security, and sustainability of our profession.

In direct response to these pressing challenges, the DPA is taking the following actions to support our members:

- In late April, we will host a town hall and open forum for DPA members to voice their concerns about the sustainability of documentary filmmaking, and plan to discuss responsible and proactive strategies to resist censorship and advocate for civil rights and liberties.

- We will issue an open letter addressed to U.S. Congressional leaders demanding the protection of freedom of expression and speech, reaffirming our unwavering support for documentary filmmakers and those in public media who risk their lives and the safety of their crews in the pursuit of truth.
- We will actively engage in industry-centric partnerships that foster discussions on equity and inclusion, ensuring that underrepresented voices continue to be heard and valued.
- We will continue to develop and provide essential resources for documentary producers to help them navigate evolving funding qualifications, make ethical decisions in filmmaking, and equip them with practical tools to diversify their funding sources, which includes additional guidance documents, workshops, and speaker series presentations.

Now more than ever, we must stand together as a community committed to truth, creativity, and resilience. We remain devoted to advocating for the resources and protections that our profession deserves, and we call on each of you to join us in taking meaningful action toward a more just and sustainable future for documentary storytelling.

With gratitude and solidarity,

Erica L. Taylor
DPA President