

## MIAMI CONGRESSWOMAN WANTS ALLIANZ ADS PULLED FROM NPR



CNBC, National Public Radio, and other media outlets are facing pressure from Miami congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen regarding sponsorships and advertising campaigns from German insurance company Allianz, which collaborated with Nazis.

Ros-Lehtinen is pushing legislation that would permit Holocaust survivors to sue Allianz AG. Ros-Lehtinen has begun a letter-writing campaign that will block the insurance company from advertising with any United States media outlet until the company pays survivors' life insurance claims. Allianz was responsible for insuring concentration camp facilities during World War II and sending money to the Nazi regime instead of Jewish beneficiaries who should have received it.

"Allianz is no ordinary insurance conglomerate," Ros-Lehtinen said in a statement to the media. "This company was involved in one of the greatest atrocities in recent history and has gone to great lengths to dodge acceptance of responsibility for its actions.

"It is far past time for Allianz to repay its debt to the survivors and families that suffered as a result of the Holocaust," wrote Ros-Lehtinen, who heads the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Holocaust Survivors' Group USA wrote a letter to various media groups regarding the relationship Allianz had with the Nazi regime.

"To that point, we noted that the Allianz ad touts its business experience through 'affiliated companies in this country since 1896,' " wrote foundation president David Schaecter. "Here again, in an effort to cover up its past, Allianz is using your program to lure American customers by invoking the era of Teddy Roosevelt and John Phillip Sousa, when its true legacy is as Adolph Hitler's insurance company."

A spokesman for A Prairie Home Companion did not respond to a call and email for comment.

Ros-Lehtinen's legislation already has over 50 sponsors in the House of Representatives and she says that this is not a personal agenda against the company.

"If they can spend money on advertising, surely they can repay insurance policies to Holocaust survivors," she said. "I hope at the very least the media companies rethink their relationships with Allianz. I know there's a lot of consideration when these big companies make advertising decisions. We want them to understand there is a moral dimension applied to this thought process. It's not all about the bottom line."

Allianz released the following statement regarding the bad press the company has received the past couple of years. "We are a company that employs 10,000 people in the United States," said Sabia Schwarzer, director of communications for Allianz of America. "It's part of conducting business that you advertise. Is there anything that we could do to undo our ugly history? No, there isn't. It's a daily reminder that whatever business decisions we make, we need to be very responsible. Generally speaking, the door for any unclaimed insurance policies remains open at Allianz."