

My name is Juan-Carlos Molleda, and I reside in Eugene. Since 2016, I have been the dean of the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Oregon.

I am offering my full support of [HB2605](#), a bill currently before the Oregon Legislature. The health of a local news ecosystem is a critical component of a functional democracy and informed communities. The proposed measure could make a significant difference by providing resources to fill significant information gaps created by news deserts across the state.

Protect Local Journalism (HB 2605) will not only strengthen the local journalism ecosystem that is essential to our democratic system of governance, it will also reduce the increasingly detrimental effects of news deserts and disinformation on Oregon citizens. In an era of rampant misinformation and deep distrust, trusted local sources of news have made a huge difference in the state's response to Covid-19, fire and disasters, voting and election information, and more. The continued decline in Oregon news organizations' capacity to cover local communities adequately and inclusively, and the importance of rebuilding public trust in journalism, are two powerful reasons to strongly support this measure.

For these reasons, I urge you to support Protecting Local Journalism and ensure the measure is funded fully. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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