

Submitter: Joe Warren
On Behalf Of: ONPA and Country Media
Committee: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3431

Joe Warren, Chief Executive for Country Media, an Oregon owned newspaper company, with print and digital news papers in Cannon Beach, Manzanita, Tillamook, Lincoln County, Florence, Coos Bay, Brookings, Cottage Grove and Dallas. And one paper in Crescent City CA.

Each of our communities we serve with a print and digital newspaper. We deliver our legal advertisers the one-two-three-punch covering our markets with both print and digital and use of our association's site through ONPA to run legal ads for our clients. All of our legal advertising appears in print and delivered each week to our customers via the USPS and also online as well as online at our Oregon Newspaper Association. We have a very strong presence in our communities in print and with our online customers. For example in Lincoln County alone we print 4,500 copies of the Lincoln County Leader and also enjoy over 160,000 page views for our online editions per month. In Tillamook County we offer 3,500 print subscribers and over 130,000 online page views per month, so our numbers are still the best out there for reach. We subscribe to secure pages with responsive design so viewing is easy on laptops, desktops and smart phones. This bill will only hurt our community newspapers. We use the revenue generated to pay staff who cover the news in our local communities. We also archive these important legal notices, provide affidavit service in house, upfront invoicing, so there are no surprises and provide both electronic and print tear-sheets to attorneys and governmental agencies, those needing to fulfill a legal obligation in doing so. One of the things I do not like about this bill is transparency. It is potentially allowing small start up web news organizations to be a legal, legal option, would be that nobody would see the notices. For example, if a news website started up in say, Yahats, in Lincoln County and the county or City of Lincoln City advertises their legal notice there instead of the long standing community paper, only those interested in Yahats will see the notice, not those affected by the action in Lincoln City or Newport. It takes out the long standing paper of record in these markets. Pricing is also not an issue in Country Media, we do not price gouge our clients offering all who run legal notices a good local rate in all of our print papers. Also we are not Main Stream Media, like some at the Capitol call us, we are the very definition of non-main-stream, we are a community news organization who employs local people to cover hyper-local news. I believe this bill feeds into the national movement to hurt news organizations. This should not happen in Oregon. This bill will gut the local news organizations of Oregon, exactly what the current national political elites want. This bill needs to be killed in committee as it does not address the very reason the current laws are on the books. It's a bad bill.

Respectfully submitted
Joe Warren
Chief Executive
Country Media