

# NEWSBERG

Community supported news in Newberg.

**Submitter:**

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**Committee:**

**State of Oregon - Senate Rules Committee**

Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Topic:**

SB 437

**Subject:**

Newsberg Expresses Neutral Support for SB 437 – Public Notice Modernization  
March 19, 2025

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Senate Rules Committee –

I am the Founding Editor of Newsberg, a locally owned and operated digital news outlet serving Newberg and Dundee. I am submitting my testimony to express my neutrality toward Senate Bill 437, which seeks to modernize public notice requirements by recognizing digital news publications.

Ensuring public notices remain accessible through a variety of platforms is a necessary step in keeping our communities informed and engaged. However, I feel the threshold for qualification, 25% locally produced content, is too low and leaves room for exploitation by large, out-of-state media conglomerates. The lack of definition for what constitutes local news also could create a loophole, leaving opportunities for exploitation by out-of-state interests.

This 25% threshold is too low and could allow larger media conglomerates, which only occasionally cover communities like Newberg, to qualify for public notice publishing. A corporate-owned publication could meet this requirement with minimal investment in local journalism while lacking consistent, in-depth coverage of civic affairs. Meanwhile, these larger outlets, with their significant financial resources, could undercut advertising rates, making it harder for independent, community-based news organizations like mine to remain sustainable.

If the goal of revising public notice laws is to ensure the widest possible reach, digital-first publications like Newsberg must be part of the equation. Newsberg's subscriber base has grown

significantly in just over two years, and our weekly circulation is beginning to eclipse that of the conglomerate-owned newspaper serving our area. This reflects a broader shift in how the rural community of Newberg-Dundee consumes news—local, independent digital publications are becoming primary sources of information for their communities.

I urge this committee to reconsider the 25% threshold and explore a higher requirement — perhaps 51% or more — to ensure public notice policies support publications with a genuine commitment to local reporting. Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any opportunity to discuss this issue further.

Branden Andersen  
Founding Editor, Newsberg