

News in the Grove

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Committee: State of Oregon – Senate Rules Committee Oregon State Capitol 900 Court St NE
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Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Senate Rules Committee –

I am the owner, editor, publisher, and pretty much every other role at News in the Grove, the Banks Post, and the Gales Creek Journal, three small independent news sites in western Washington County.

I am largely in favor of Senate Bill 437, a bill which seeks to modernize Oregon's public notice requirement system.

I love print media. It's why my largely digital newspapers still have a print product for those who wish to get their news the old-fashioned way. I'm proud to print locally, too, supporting businesses in our community, not in another state or even country like some of our competitors.

Despite this, most of my subscribers have opted to go for a digital-only news product. They enjoy the faster deliverability, the inclusion of photo galleries, the interactive maps, data graphs, videos, and audio clips I weave together to create a modern newspaper.

I've found the best way to deliver the news is to work directly with our community, listen to their needs, and adapt as needed to get vital information in the hands, or, in most cases, the screens of our readers.

I'm proud to say, that despite my status as a relatively new independent media outfit, I deliver more city news in the city of Banks, for example, than any other legacy print media organization.

So why can't the city choose to use our services for their legal notices? We have a deep reach into their jurisdiction that I believe is unmatched.

SB437 would allow local jurisdictions to have more flexibility to choose what fits their needs best.

My largest concern with this bill is the threshold for qualification, 25% locally produced content.

The 25% threshold is too low and risks allowing large, out-of-state corporations to siphon local public notice dollars while providing minimal real local journalism. Raising it to at least 51% would ensure that truly local newsrooms and the public they serve benefit from this bill, not just media conglomerates with a token presence.

Thank you for your time.

Chas Hundley

