

Submitter:

Noel Nash

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB686

Chairman Jama, vice-chair Bonham, committee members ...

I'm not a venture capitalist or part of a hedge fund. I live and work seven days a week in Oregon. I've been in journalism for more than 40 years. Our nonpartisan coverage helps edify and uplift the four communities we serve. This potential money is not seen as a gift. It's compensation for decades of stealing content -- news and information content specifically -- gathered and written by reporters and curated by editors for the greatest benefit to readers. Newspapers have expended great resources to add their own intellectual property to content in a way that makes it unique. Yet, tech platforms distributed our material as just a commodity on the internet, and those tech companies never provided compensation for those who did the work. Since purchasing a weekly newspaper in Oregon six years ago, our staffing has fluctuated from 8 full-timers and a dozen freelance contributors to our current three full-timers and half-dozen stringers. Tariffs have increased our printing costs by 5% and that number is expected to grow. We're staying alive thanks to a growing subscriber base, supportive advertisers, and a rare grant here or there. But we're a mile wide and an inch deep. This revenue would allow us to hire staff to cover our communities with appropriate depth and even greater credibility. Our paper covers three city councils, a county commission, four schools boards, and a nonprofit community that, per capita, has more nonprofits than any other county in Oregon. The 90,000 people living in these rural communities would have no other local news source -- coverage of family, friends, and neighbors -- without our cross-platform newspaper. We need you to pass this bill to preserve this source for our readers. Again, thank you.