

Submitter:

Susan Palmiter

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB686

I scour the news every day to find out about the bills you work on that matter to me as well as other important happenings in my community and in the state and I notice that so much goes uncovered. We just don't have enough energy devoted to good journalism.

I am writing today to ask you to support SB 686: The Oregon Journalism Protection Act, an important bill that will protect Oregon jobs, empower local communities, and demand fair compensation from big tech. The Problem: Mega-Platforms profit from local news while damaging Oregon public service journalism.

Mega digital platforms like Google and Meta are acting like a "plagiarism machine" that profits from news content without fairly compensating newsrooms. Other jurisdictions have developed anti-trust legislation to address this problem. Smaller platforms like Apple News and Perplexity have already made fair deals with news content providers - showing that profitability under a shared revenue model is possible – even for smaller platforms. Mega platforms should do the same and do right by Oregon's news organizations.

When Newsrooms Close, Oregonians Lose. Over the past 18 years, 27% of the state's newspapers have closed, leaving many communities with limited or no access to reliable local news. Closures and layoffs in newsrooms harm Oregonians, cost jobs in journalism, and harm our civic life.

The Solution: The Oregon Journalism Protection Act (SB 686) requires large platforms to fairly compensate Oregon news publishers for content that supports platform traffic, audience, and profits. Inspired by successful models in Canada, Australia, New Jersey, and California, and similar efforts underway in 16 states and cities like New York and Chicago, this bill rebalances the market and reinvests in Oregon's local journalism.

Key Provisions of SB 686:

? Returns Fair Share of Revenue Directly to Oregon Newsrooms

Covered platforms must pay a fair share of news content revenue, to be set by statute or determined through arbitration:

\* Payments are distributed based on the number of journalists employed – not impressions or clicks – incentivizing news providers to keep their newsrooms fully staffed, or even grow.

- \* At least 70% of funds received must go directly to newsroom staff and operations.
- \* Annual reporting is required to track spending and ensure transparency.
- \* News organizations can choose to make a claim for direct payments or apply for a grant.

? Establishes the Nonprofit Oregon Civic Information Consortium to Make Grants for Local Publications and Media Makers

- \* A new nonprofit housed at the University of Oregon will make grants to support local journalism —especially for micro and startup publications and media projects in underserved communities, rural areas, and ethnic media outlets.

Please pass this bill out of committee.

Susan Palmiter  
Portland