

177 Terrace St.
Ashland, OR 97520
8 February 2026

Subj: SB 1580

Dear Chair Meek, Vice Chair Drazan and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government,

I request that you do not support SB 1580 in its current form. I am a resident of Ashland, Oregon and a board member of Ashland.news. I am submitting testimony consistent with concerns raised by multiple independent publishers across Oregon.

The Oregon Independent News Network, a coalition of independent local news organizations, has urged the legislature not to advance SB 1580 and has asked lawmakers to convene a broader, interim stakeholder process. The coalition has also raised concerns about the bill's distribution structure and potential platform-related risks, citing examples from other jurisdictions.

The Ashland.news Board shares concerns that SB 1580, as written, carries unresolved risks for independent publishers and may not reliably deliver the intended benefits for local journalism in Oregon communities. I strongly urge you to reject legislation that may not support independent local journalism and instead send tax dollars to out of state corporations that do not necessarily share the interests of Oregonians.

As outlets for reliable local news dwindle, citizens of Oregon, particularly those in smaller towns and rural areas lose not only vital sources of information about issues affecting their communities, they lose access to a cornerstone of our democracy: A free and independent press.

For these reasons, I urge you not to advance SB 1580 as written and to pursue a more inclusive and deliberative path.

Very truly yours,

Morgan T. Sammons