

Monday, Feb. 9, 2026

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

I am a board member of Ashland.news and 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.

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

Thank you for considering my testimony.

*Kenneth M. Freedman*

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