

Submitter: Noel Nash
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1580

Dear Chairman Meek, vice-Chair Drazen and members of the committee.

I'm here in support of Senate Bill 1580.

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. My wife and I purchased our nonpartisan weekly newspaper six years ago with the intention of helping edify and uplift the four communities we serve. This potential money is not seen as a gift. It's compensation for decades of stolen 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 have distributed our material as a commodity on the internet. Those tech companies have never provided compensation for those who have done the original work. At our paper, staffing has fluctuated from 8 full-timers and a dozen freelance contributors to our current five full-timers and half-dozen stringers. Tariffs have increased our printing costs alone by 10%. We're staying alive thanks to a growing subscriber base, supportive advertisers, and a rare grant here or there. 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 school 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.