

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

Hello. My name is Mac Larsen and I am here to testify in support of Oregon Senate Bill 1580.

I'm the Staff Reporter and Assistant Editor for the Review in Lake Oswego.

Previously, I covered education in LO, West Linn, Wilsonville and in between in Clackamas County.

Recently, somebody asked me if I was ever intimidated to interview state and federal politicians, like yourselves, and I replied, "It is much more intimidating to interview a seventh or eighth grader because they will tell you exactly what they're thinking. A thirteen-year-old will just tell you, 'You look tired right to your face.'"

In that spirit of radical honesty, it is incredibly difficult to be a journalist in Oregon in 2026. Simply put, the media organizations that hire us and then help us learn and improve cannot pay us a living wage to live in the communities we cover.

I cannot capture everything that would be lost if local journalism in Oregon continues to decline, but I believe this bill, 1580, could make a meaningful difference in fighting back against the erosion of advertising revenue that supports careers in media.

I am asked by high school or middle school students all the time what it's like to work for a newspaper and be a journalist. It's gotten harder and harder to say that I think it's a viable career in the future.

There are young people in every city that I write about who aspire to work in media and make a meaningful difference in their communities by writing, reporting, making videos, podcasts and talking to their neighbors. Let's provide a foundation for them to excel and grow as journalists and build a world where it is a sustainable career.