

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

A functioning democracy demands an informed public. As newsrooms shrink and close, we are less able to learn about ongoing programs and projects (both failures and successes) and how we can work to strengthen our communities. The Gresham Outlook for example has reduced publication to once a week, challenging timely local coverage in even one of Oregon's largest cities. The process of posting public notices in a timely manner has also been strained. These impacts are even greater in many smaller communities outright losing local coverage entirely.

At the same time that less money is flowing for people to do this critical work, tech companies are raking in unprecedented sums on the results of journalism efforts. AI companies in particular are digesting journalists' work without compensation, then turning around and sinking unfathomable sums into feeding their predictive algorithm machines. This bill can't solve all of our problems, but takes an important step by demanding that companies that profit from journalism pay for it.

Stronger language may be needed to tackle specific issues with AI companies scraping local journalism to train AI models and then "generating" a thinly veiled rehashing of that work. This may be work needed in a future session.

It may also be helpful to add more explicit language specifying that notices by electronic mail are subject to response deadlines based on when they are sent. There are recent cases of tech companies abusing the excuse that notices were sent to spam to avoid laws in Europe: <https://nikolak.com/gdpr-failure/>. As identified in the linked article, an explicit requirement to manually review messages may be constructive.

Sincerely,
Tabitha Boschetti and Darrick Wong
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