

To: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government

Re: Support of SB 1580

Date: 2/11/26

Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Drazan and committee-

My name is Laurie Hieb and I'm the Executive Director of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. I urge your support for SB 1580.

This bill provides long-overdue compensation to Oregon newsrooms for content they have already produced and that continues to generate value for large technology platforms. That compensation helps stabilize — and in many cases increase — the number of reporters keeping Oregonians informed. SB 1580 benefits independent, nonprofit, and community-based publishers alike, ensuring fairness across business models and newsroom sizes.

I want to thank Senator Pham and her staff for more than a year of work refining this bill and listening to stakeholders. The version before you reflects substantial fixes and real compromise. One key improvement requires that 90 percent of journalist stipends go directly to journalist pay, keeping the money in Oregon and supporting newsroom jobs, along with an extensive reporting mechanism for transparency.

Another inclusive change made- gives single journalist-owners the flexibility to participate either through direct compensation or through the consortium.

You may hear claims that some concerns were not heard. It's important to be clear: not getting everything you want in legislation does not mean you were ignored. It means certain proposals would not work. SB 1580 reflects thoughtful compromise, including the removal of Facebook. Small publishers raised legitimate concerns about the loss of extending their reach by the ability to upload their stories and share them within their community on Facebook. Publishers uploading their stories to a platform like Facebook is different from a platform like Google taking it and using it for its detailed summary for monetization.

The consortium created by this bill is positioned to do positive, statewide work — supporting collaboration, innovation, and shared resources that help inform and engage communities. It has a balanced board, strong accountability, and the opportunity to attract additional funding that can further strengthen local journalism across Oregon.

It is unrealistic to expect local news organizations to take on adjudicated monopolies or the world's largest technology companies in court. State legislation is the only practical path forward. Without SB 1580, the current system continues to enrich Big Tech while community news erodes across our state.

This bill is not a subsidy or a penalty, or a link tax. It is a legitimate cost of doing business — compensation for work already done and work to be done. SB 1580 is about fairness, sustainability, and preserving trusted local journalism. I strongly urge your support.

This is about damages. The only way to get critical mass in Oregon is to include the larger newsrooms. The more journalists you have, the more content you produce, the more content being taken. Per journalist is the only fair way.

I strongly and respectfully urge your support.