

Date: February 9, 2023  
To: House Committee on Rules  
From: Bayla Orton, Fund for Rural Journalism  
Re: Support for Protect Local Journalism, HB 2605

Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and members of the committee:

My name is Bayla Orton and I reside in Bend, Oregon. I am a writer for The Obsidian, a publication made possible by the Fund for Rural Oregon Journalism. Additionally, I am an Associate Editor for The Summit Pinnacle, Summit High School's student run newspaper.

As a senior in high school this year, I've decided to continue my education at a college or university in the fall. I applied to multiple schools as a journalism major, but because of the state of the profession currently, I have been hesitant to pursue my passion. This legislation would help me, and many other young journalists, gain confidence in journalism as a profession and therefore encourage them to invest in the field. Central Oregon is a community full of intelligent people that support democracy and who want to read the news to stay educated. Expanding resources for local journalism, specifically in Oregon, would help continue to reliably inform citizens, in a society full of misinformation and the negativity caused by it.

Protect Local Journalism, HB 2605 will further encourage me, and others, to pursue journalism as a career—supporting the field over time. Additionally, this measure will allow more and more individuals to stay in touch with current events, creating a more educated, knowledgeable community.

For these reasons, I urge your support for Protecting Local Journalism and urge the measure to be funded fully. Thank you.

Bayla Orton