

Date: February 9, 2023  
To: House Committee on Rules  
From: Lisa Heyamoto, LION (Local, Independent, Online News) Publishers  
Re: Support for Protect Local Journalism, HB 2605

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

My name is Lisa Heyamoto, and I reside in Portland, Oregon. I am the Director of Programming for Member Education at [LION Publishers](#). We are a nonprofit organization that strengthens the local news industry by helping independent news publishers build more sustainable businesses.

Our role at LION is to help our 450+ members in the U.S. and Canada build and run better businesses. Businesses that serve their communities. Businesses that can pay a living wage. Businesses that can recruit and retain talent. Businesses that can grow their reach, revenue and impact. Businesses that are here to stay.

Our vision is a world where thriving, independent news organizations provide equitable access to inclusive and impactful news and information.

At LION, we believe that no single news organization can effectively serve an entire population — and that that's a good thing. Different populations have different information needs, and need to receive that information in a way that meets them where they are. That's why we work to create and support information ecosystems comprising a variety of news organizations that collectively meet the needs of the broader population they aim to serve.

But that requires vision, coordination and collaboration — exactly the outcomes HB 2605 aims to achieve. States like North Carolina, Colorado and New Jersey have taken such an approach, and the fruits of those efforts are both positive and promising. Oregon is well-positioned to join this group of pioneers, and this bill is a critical first step.

I have seen firsthand how a robust local news ecosystem can transform communities and geographic regions by increasing civic engagement, combatting disinformation and creating a sense of shared mission and experience that creates durable and long-lasting community benefits.

Protect Local Journalism, HB 2605 will harness the invaluable work that Oregon's journalism outlets are doing every day and amplify those efforts to become more than the sum of their parts. Here's an example of what this kind of collective effort has yielded in North Carolina:

- A partnership that delivered Spanish language emergency alerts on extreme weather and COVID-19 via mobile app
- A co-op that bridged the digital divide by connecting thousands of kids and families to the internet
- A reporting center that created a model of reliable journalism in rural communities
- A program that enabled a diverse group of community journalists to address news and

media deserts

- A fund that supported a corps of paid interns to give new reporters valuable experience in the field while providing quality journalism

Oregonians deserve these kinds of outcomes as well. For these reasons, I urge your support for Protecting Local Journalism, and urge the measure be funded fully. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Lisa Heyamoto  
Portland, OR