

MISSOURI PRESS ASSOCIATION

802 Locust Street / Columbia, Missouri 65201

Phone: 573-449-4167 / Fax: 573-874-5894 / www.mopress.com



January 7, 2022

The Honorable Josh R. Hawley
United States Senate
212 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hawley,

I represent news publishers in the state of Missouri, and I am reaching out to request your sponsorship of H.R. 1735 / S.673, the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act (JCPA). This bipartisan bill is critically important to protecting the future of high-quality, local journalism in Missouri and across the country. We need your support now to sustain coverage of issues of vital importance to your communities.

A free and diverse press is the backbone of a healthy and vibrant democracy. Yet the control of access to trustworthy news online has become concentrated in the hands of two dominant tech platforms, Facebook and Google. Despite news being the reason for which a significant portion of users turn to Facebook and Google, these companies leverage their dominance over the digital marketplace to set the rules for news publishers and determine how journalism is displayed, prioritized, and monetized.

The JCPA would help address these problems by allowing publishers such as us to come together to negotiate with the platforms for the compensation they deserve, and an enforcement mechanism would ensure equitable compensation to ALL news publishers big and small.

Recent experiences in Australia and Europe demonstrate that other countries recognize the disparity in bargaining power between news publishers and Facebook and Google and are moving towards a new compensation model for publishers, one that ensures that equitable terms are offered to all publishers and that platforms participate in good faith.

2022 MPA Board of Directors -- President: Roger Dillon, *Shannon County Current Wave*, Eminence - **First Vice President:** Beth Durreman, *Leader Publications*, Festus - **Second Vice President:** Amos Bridges, *The Springfield News Leader* - **Secretary:** Marion Jordon, *The Kansas City Globe* - **Treasurer:** Bryan Chester, *Columbia Missourian* - **Past President:** Liz Irwin, *Missouri Lawyers Media* - **Directors:** Hannah Spaar, *The Odessan*, Odessa - Bryan E. Jones, *Morgan County Statesman* - Kevin Jones, *St. Louis American* - Gary Castor, *Jefferson City News Tribune* - Donna Bischoff, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* - Tim Schmidt, *Montgomery Standard* - Sandy Nelson, *Courier Tribune*, Kearney and Liberty - Lucas Presson, *Southeast Missourian*, Cape Girardeau - **National Newspaper Association Representative:** Peggy Scott, *Jefferson County Leader*, Festus

MISSOURI PRESS ASSOCIATION

802 Locust Street / Columbia, Missouri 65201

Phone: 573-449-4167 / Fax: 573-874-5894 / www.mopress.com



The moment to act in the U.S. is now. It is more important than ever to protect quality journalism and ensure that the people who create journalistic content are compensated fairly for their often-painstaking work.

Journalism is critical to a functioning democracy, and the price of inaction – the disappearance of local news – is too great. I urge you to support Missouri news publishers and sponsor the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark Maassen'.

Mark Maassen
Executive Director
Missouri Press Association

2022 MPA Board of Directors -- President: Roger Dillon, *Shannon County Current Wave*, Eminence - **First Vice President:** Beth Durreman, *Leader Publications*, Festus - **Second Vice President:** Amos Bridges, *The Springfield News Leader* - **Secretary:** Marion Jordon, *The Kansas City Globe* - **Treasurer:** Bryan Chester, *Columbia Missourian* - **Past President:** Liz Irwin, *Missouri Lawyers Media* - **Directors:** Hannah Spaar, *The Odessan*, Odessa - Bryan E. Jones, *Morgan County Statesman* - Kevin Jones, *St. Louis American* - Gary Castor, *Jefferson City News Tribune* - Donna Bischoff, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* - Tim Schmidt, *Montgomery Standard* - Sandy Nelson, *Courier Tribune*, Kearney and Liberty - Lucas Presson, *Southeast Missourian*, Cape Girardeau - **National Newspaper Association Representative:** Peggy Scott, *Jefferson County Leader*, Festus