Local Journalism Sustainability Act
117th Congress

Supported by: Report for America, America’s Newspapers, National Newspaper Association, News Media Alliance, Rebuild Local News Coalition

The Local Journalism Sustainability Act is a bipartisan bill that provides a pathway to financial viability for local newspapers, be them in print or online, through a series of three tax credits. Such publications were already facing financial hardships prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which have only worsened over the last year.

Local Newspaper Subscription Credit
This credit will grow publications’ subscription bases by incentivizing Americans to subscribe to local newspapers.
- Five-year credit of up to $250 annually.
- Credit covers 80% of subscription costs in first year and 50% in subsequent four years.
  - To receive full $250 credit, a subscriber would have to spend at least $312.50 in the first year, and $500 each of the following four years.
- Credit can be used with non-profit publications if the publication is the non-profit’s primary activity.

Local Newspaper Journalist Compensation Credit
This credit will provide publications the ability to hire more dedicated local news journalists to improve their newsroom coverage.
- Five-year credit of up to $25,000 in first year and up to $15,000 in subsequent four years.
- Credit covers 50% of compensation up to $50,000 in first year, and 30% of compensation up to $50,000 in subsequent four years.
- Journalist must meet a minimum of 100 hours of work per quarter to qualify as an eligible employee.

Local Newspaper and Local Media Advertising Credit
This credit will provide small business financial flexibility to spend on advertising in local newspapers and media.
- Five-year credit of up to $5,000 in first year and up to $2,500 in subsequent four years.
- Credit covers 80% of advertising costs in first year and 50% in subsequent four years.
  - To receive full $5,000 in first year and $2,500 in subsequent four years, a small business would have spent at least $6,250 and $5,000 respectively.
- To increase flexibility, small businesses may utilize this credit to advertise with local television and radio stations, in addition to local newspapers.

Definition of Local Newspaper
For the purposes of this bill, local newspaper is defined as a print or digital publication if:
- The primary content of such publication is original content derived from primary sources and relating to news and current events.
- Such publication primarily serves the needs of a regional or local community.
- The publisher of such publication employs at least one local news journalist who resides in such regional or local community.
- The publisher of such publication employs not greater than 750 employees.

Definition of Local News Journalist
For the purposes of this bill, local news journalist is defined as an individual employed by a local newspaper who:
- Regularly gathers, collects, photographs, records, writes, or reports news or information that concerns local events or other matters of local public interest.

To review cosponsors from the previous (116th) Congress, click here. Please contact Ben.Owens@mail.house.gov with Rep. Kirkpatrick’s office, or Aaron.Larson@mail.house.gov with Rep. Newhouse’s office, with any questions.