**Google and Facebook Economic Power Sample Editorial**

Google and Facebook are out of control.

These two platforms have incredible influence over our lives and are responsible for so much of the misinformation that continues to plague our country. Even President Biden has called out Facebook for allowing misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines to spread for months.

But more than just misinformation, Google and Facebook have virtual monopoly power over the distribution of digital news content, which they know drives people to their platforms. And once people get to their sites, these platforms serve up news publishers’ content without paying for it along with advertising that they benefit from. These companies then hoard critical data and use clever tactics, like reframing stories in rich previews, to keep users on their sites. All of this deprives news publishers, who have traditionally relied on advertising for revenue, of the ability to monetize their own content.

Google and Facebook make billions of dollars from this practice. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, Google and Facebook reported revenues of $55.3 billion and $26.2 billion, respectively. To examine this in greater detail, Google and Facebook generated $4 million in U.S. advertising revenue every 15 minutes during the first quarter of 2021. That amount could fund more than 50 well-paid journalism jobs for an entire year.

It’s no wonder that, despite record news consumption, local newspapers across the country have seen diminished revenues, leading many to lay off journalists or go out of business. Local newspapers simply can’t compete with Google and Facebook. The balance of power between these platforms and local newspapers – let alone any single local paper – is so vast that negotiating one-to-one would be pointless, assuming it could happen at all. What’s even more perverse is that antitrust laws protect Google and Facebook from the possibility of news publishers working together to demand better financial terms. If anything, the antitrust protections should flow the other way, to protect news outlets from the outsized power of Big Tech.

The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act (JCPA) aims to do just that. The JCPA is a bipartisan bill that is specifically designed to address Google’s and Facebook’s anticompetitive practices. This proposed legislation would provide a temporary, limited antitrust safe harbor for news publishers to collectively negotiate with Facebook and Google for fair compensation for the use of their content. Most importantly, the JCPA would allow market forces, not two tech companies, to determine how and for what price news publishers’ content is offered.

In July, President Biden issued an executive order to promote a more competitive marketplace, because he recognizes the threat that market consolidation poses to workers, businesses, consumers and the economy at large. Companies like Google and Facebook have used their monopoly power to stifle competition, including by buying companies they perceive as being potential threats. For news publishers, the JCPA helps address Google’s and Facebook’s monopoly power by enabling more subscription and advertising dollars to flow back to publishers, thus protecting quality news and encouraging competition.

We cannot afford to allow Google and Facebook to continue threatening our vibrant and free press. It’s time for meaningful and reasonable action to address these platforms’ ability to underpay news publishers for their content. With the passage of the JCPA, small and local newspapers would finally get the market power they need to demand the compensation they deserve.

To date, many members of Congress from both parties have voiced their support for local journalism and the JCPA. It is inspiring to see how this issue is bringing elected officials together who all recognize how important newspapers are to our country and the threat they face from Google and Facebook. We strongly encourage all those who have yet to support the JCPA to take a stand in favor of a solution that will help local newspapers level the playing field with Big Tech.