

January 28, 2022

Senator Dick Durbin
Senator Charles Grassley
Senate Judiciary Committee
Washington D.C.

Dear Senators Durbin, Grassley and fellow members of the Judiciary Committee:

I write in full-throated support for the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act, scheduled for a hearing before your committee next week. As someone who has made a career in local journalism, I cannot overstate the strain on news organizations caused by the monopoly position of the Internet behemoths. The peril is not just to news providers, but to communities and to democracy itself.

Others have documented the dreary numbers, so I need not repeat the details. The general point is this: Google and Facebook collect our work under their banners and then siphon off the advertising that once helped pay for that journalism. They have taken a huge share of our revenues while contributing only a pittance toward the great expense of covering the news. No wonder their profits are so fat.

The Tampa Bay Times remains the largest news organization in Florida, and we have made enormous strides into the digital age. We have 30,000 subscribers who read us only on their phones and computers. Even so, when it comes to "negotiating" for the rights to our work, we are a very small David going up against enormous Goliaths. The JCPA would give local publishers a fighting chance, by letting us stand together on a more level footing with Google and Facebook.

I came to this newspaper as a kid reporter 47 years ago, and I hope that the people of Florida and Tampa Bay can count on the Times for thorough, original and independent reporting far into the future. The JCPA would improve those chances significantly. I implore you to give the bill your full consideration and advance it toward passage into law.

With respect and appreciation,



Paul Tash