



Sen. Steve Stadelman

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10300SB3592sam001

LRB103 38956 SPS 71693 a

1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 3592

2 AMENDMENT NO. _____. Amend Senate Bill 3592 by replacing
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Strengthening Community Media Act.

6 Section 5. Findings.

7 (a) Illinois benefits from robust local news services that
8 provide trusted and essential information to the community
9 that limits corruption, encourages citizen participation,
10 helps combat misinformation, and mitigates community and
11 individual alienation.

12 (b) Local news in Illinois and throughout the country is
13 struggling with newspaper advertising dropping 82% nationally
14 since 2000, contributing to a 57% drop in the number of
15 reporters at newspapers and thousands of closures.

16 (c) Local news outlets are trusted sources of information

1 for communities throughout Illinois and advertising spending
2 with these outlets carries a substantial benefit for the
3 effective dissemination of important government information to
4 the communities it serves.

5 (d) Government initiatives to increase spending on local
6 news advertising has been manifestly successful in both
7 supporting local news outlets and improving the information
8 diet of communities in several major cities.

9 (e) Illinois can and will implement such an initiative
10 while preserving the editorial independence of local news
11 outlets selling advertising space under this Act, and
12 recognizes that any diversion of advertising spending that has
13 the effect or appearance of an attempt to influence the
14 editorial content of a local news organization violates the
15 federal and State guarantees of freedom of the press and
16 freedom of speech.

17 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

18 "Department" means the Department of Commerce and Economic
19 Opportunity.

20 "Local news organization" means an entity that:

21 (1) engages professionals to create, edit, produce,
22 and distribute original content concerning matters of
23 public interest, through reporting activities, including
24 conducting interviews, observing current events, or
25 analyzing documents or other information;

1 (2) has at least one employee employed full-time for
2 30 hours a week or more dedicated to providing coverage of
3 Illinois or local Illinois community news and living
4 within 50 miles of the coverage area, who gathers,
5 prepares, collects, photographs, writes, edits, reports,
6 or publishes original local or State community news for
7 dissemination to the local or State community;

8 (3) in the case of print publications, has published
9 at least one print publication per month over the previous
10 12 months, and either holds a valid United States Postal
11 Service periodical permit or has at least 25% of its
12 content dedicated to local news;

13 (4) in the case of digital-only entities, has
14 published one piece about the community per week over the
15 previous 12 months and has at least 33% of its digital
16 audience in Illinois, averaged over a 12-month period;

17 (5) in the case of hybrid entities that that have both
18 print and digital outlets, meets the requirements in
19 either paragraph (3) or (4) of this definition;

20 (6) has disclosed in its print publication or on its
21 website its beneficial ownership or, in the case of a
22 not-for-profit entity, its board of directors;

23 (7) in the case of an entity that maintains tax status
24 under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue
25 Code, has declared the coverage of local or State news as
26 the stated mission in its filings with the Internal

1 Revenue Service; and

2 (8) has not received more than 50% of its gross
3 receipts for the previous year from political action
4 committees or other entities described in Section 527 of
5 the federal Internal Revenue Code, or from an organization
6 that maintains Section 501(c)(4) or 501(c)(6) status under
7 the federal Internal Revenue Code.

8 Section 15. Notice of sale of a local news organization. A
9 local news organization shall not be sold to a company without
10 giving written notice 120 days before the sales occurs to the
11 following:

12 (1) affected employees and representatives of affected
13 employees;

14 (2) the Department and the county government in which
15 the local news organization is located; and

16 (3) any in-State nonprofit organization in the
17 business of buying local news organizations.

18 Section 90. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is
19 amended by adding Section 65.125 as follows:

20 (110 ILCS 947/65.125 new)

21 Sec. 65.125. Journalism Student Scholarship Program.

22 (a) As used in this Section, "local news organization" has
23 the meaning given to that term in the Strengthening Community

1 Media Act.

2 (b) In order to encourage academically talented Illinois
3 students to pursue careers in journalism, especially in
4 underserved areas of the State, and to provide those students
5 with financial assistance to increase the likelihood that they
6 will complete their full academic commitment and elect to
7 remain in Illinois to pursue a career in journalism, subject
8 to appropriation, the Commission shall implement and
9 administer the Journalism Student Scholarship Program. The
10 Commission shall annually award scholarships to persons
11 preparing to work in Illinois, with preference given to those
12 preparing to work in underserved areas. These scholarships
13 shall be awarded to individuals who make application to the
14 Commission and agree to sign an agreement under which the
15 recipient pledges that, within the 2-year period following the
16 termination of the academic program for which the recipient
17 was awarded a scholarship, the recipient shall:

18 (1) begin working in journalism in this State for a
19 period of not less than 2 years;

20 (2) fulfill this obligation at local news
21 organization; and

22 (3) upon request of the Commission, provide the
23 Commission with evidence that the recipient is fulfilling
24 or has fulfilled the terms of the teaching agreement
25 provided for in this subsection.

26 (c) An eligible student is a student who meets the

1 following qualifications:

2 (1) is a resident of this State and a citizen or
3 eligible noncitizen of the United States;

4 (2) is a high school graduate or a person who has
5 received an Illinois high school diploma;

6 (3) is enrolled or accepted, on at least a half-time
7 basis, at an institution of higher learning; and

8 (4) is pursuing a postsecondary course of study
9 leading to a career in journalism or a similar field.

10 (d) Each scholarship shall be used by the recipient for
11 the payment of tuition and fees at an institution of higher
12 learning.

13 (e) The Commission shall administer the Program and shall
14 adopt all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with
15 this Section for its effective implementation."