



THE UNIONS OF LEE ENTERPRISES

To the executives and publishers of Lee Enterprises:

On behalf of members from the unionized newspapers of this company, we ask that you take advantage of the latest COVID relief package and provide much-needed stability to our newsrooms.

Thanks to tireless work from union members throughout the country, language was included in the bill passed last month that expanded access to the Paycheck Protection Program, allowing companies like Lee Enterprises to request PPP loans based on the needs of individual newspapers. This was done not only because of the impact the pandemic has had on revenues, but also because of the important role our journalists play in providing accurate information during a public health crisis. Our communities depend on us — now more than ever.

The company is eligible to collect millions in forgivable loans designed to support employment. The rules for how that money can be spent have been expanded with the goal of maintaining staff sizes and wages. This is our primary concern as layoffs, buyouts and unfilled vacancies have greatly diminished our ability to do the journalism that is the mission of this company. Collecting these loans would send a strong signal to our communities that Lee Enterprises is committed to serving our readers by supporting the journalists trying to keep them safe.

We understand some at the company may have interpreted Lee’s agreement with Berkshire Hathaway to mean the company can’t apply for this aid. But because these loans are forgivable, we believe an exception can and should be made given these unique circumstances. We want to work with the company to overcome any issue that may stand in the way.

We’d like to request a meeting between company leadership and representatives from our unions to discuss this further. We’d also be happy to provide more information on how this relief package can benefit our papers. Contact information has been provided in a follow-up email.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Signed:

**Blue Ridge NewsGuild
Buffalo Newspaper Guild
Casper News Guild
Kenosha Newspaper Guild
Montana News Guild**

**Omaha World-Herald Guild
Richmond Newspapers Professional Association
Southern Illinois News Guild
Timesland News Guild
United Media Guild**