

# AFL-CIO

## LEGISLATIVE ALERT

September 3, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader, United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20515-0512

The Honorable Richard E. Neal  
372 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20515-2101

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi and Chairman Neal:

Communities across America face an information crisis, as more than 37,000 journalists have lost their jobs or been pulled from their work by furloughs since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 85 local newsrooms have been shuttered due to the ongoing economic fallout. Newsrooms in smaller communities have been hardest hit. They depend on local ad revenue and subscribers. The loss of the essential local news sources mean fewer Americans have access to fact-based reporting on their local government, communities and the health crisis still plaguing our nation.

We commend Senator Cantwell and Representative Kirkpatrick for introducing the Local Journalism Sustainability Act (H.R. 3940/S. 2434) as a lifeline for these essential community institutions as they struggle to provide the information their readers rely on during the current national emergency, and to set local news outlets up for a successful recovery.

Most importantly, the AFL-CIO is pleased that the bill would protect local news jobs, by providing a five-year tax credit of up to \$25,000 against the payroll costs for local news journalists. In addition, we support the bill's provision that would create a tax credit for consumers of up to \$250 to cover as much as 80% of the cost of a subscription to their local newspaper or website, including non-profit news organizations. Finally, because it also would provide local businesses with tax credits of up to \$5,000 to spend on advertising in local news organizations, the bill will provide an economic boost to both small businesses and local news.

This legislation will enable communities across the country to provide more and better news coverage. We urge Congressional leadership to advance the Local Journalism Sustainability Act in any possible upcoming legislative vehicle. Thank you for your support on this important issue to working people across the country.

Sincerely,



William Samuel  
Director, Government Affairs