***Editor's Note:*** *Members are encouraged to publish this opinion piece — or write their own editorial — to educate the public about this important issue. An editorial cartoon will be available soon at:* [*https://newspapers.org/ljsa/*](https://newspapers.org/ljsa/)

**Supporting Local Journalism Supports This Community
Dean Ridings
CEO, America's Newspapers**

The Local Journalism Sustainability Act (LJSA) was recently introduced in the House and has now been introduced in the Senate – and will benefit every member of this community! Unlike many issues in Washington, this legislation has bipartisan support and is focused on delivering benefits to local communities across the U.S. by sustaining local news organizations, including this newspaper.

Newspapers are facing significant fiscal challenges due to technological disruption, including Google’s and Facebook’s use of newspapers’ content without compensation. This legislation provides an important, but temporary means of support to help newspapers with needed transition, and it deserves the support of Congressional representatives across the country. The bill incentivizes the behaviors needed to facilitate changes to the business model. Please join your local newspaper in calling on members of Congress to support this legislation.

The LJSA has been designed to provide a much-needed boost to newspapers. What it isn’t is a permanent handout for local newspapers. Instead, it’s a well-thought-out approach to help sustain local newsgathering efforts through a series of tax credits that expire in five years. And it not only will provide aid to newspapers, but also to subscribers and local small businesses through tax credits that will benefit them directly.

Newspaper subscribers already understand the importance of their local newspaper and that their continued support is critical. Through this legislation, subscribers will receive a tax credit of up to $250 per year. It’s a win-win for subscribers as this tax credit will cover a significant part of their annual newspaper subscription, no matter if it’s print or digital.

For local businesses, there’s a direct benefit from the LJSA, as well. When they use the effective print and digital solutions of their local newspaper, they will be eligible for a tax credit up to $5,000 the first year and $2,500 per year for the next four years. Not only will this credit offset some of their advertising investment, it also will help them improve their business by reaching more customers and generating more sales. It keeps money invested locally and helps maintain jobs and support other local initiatives.

For local newspapers, the LJSA provides a much-needed bridge to continue the evolution toward a digitally-based model. The temporary tax credits for newspapers will be tied directly to maintaining healthy newsrooms and employing professional journalists committed to producing local news and information. The benefits will be local, not redirected to national media organizations, and provide local readers with continued access to the content that’s most important to their lives.

However, in order for the LJSA to provide these benefits to subscribers, local businesses and newspapers, it needs the support from members of the House and Senate. And the best way for that to happen is for them to hear directly from their constituents and supporters. To support the future of local newspapers, reach out to your representatives and encourage them to support the Local Journalism Sustainability Act, and – in turn – support the communities they serve. There’s a benefit for everyone.

*On behalf of its approximately 1,500 newspaper and associate member companies, America’s Newspapers is committed to explaining, defending and advancing the vital role of newspapers in democracy and civil life. We put an emphasis on educating the public on all the ways newspapers contribute to building a community identity and the success of local businesses. Learn more:* [*www.newspapers.org*](http://www.newspapers.org)

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