

# **SB0459 – Procurement – Advertising – Local News Or**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR**  
**SB0459 – Procurement – Advertising – Local News Organizations**  
**(Local Newspapers for Maryland Communities Act of 2026)**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Rosapepe  
**Committee:** Senate Budget and Taxation  
**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition  
**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, Cochair  
**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0459 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

SB0459 requires State agencies to ensure that at least 50% of their print and digital advertising dollars go directly to local news organizations. This is a simple, sensible step that strengthens Maryland’s media at a time when local journalism is under enormous strain. Local newsrooms are essential to public accountability, civic participation, and an informed electorate. When they weaken, our democracy weakens with them.

MLC leadership cherishes our subscriptions to *The Baltimore Banner*, *Maryland Matters*, and *The Baltimore Sun*. We believe these publications are part of the reason Maryland benefits from strong, responsive leadership—because they ask hard questions, provide context, and make government accessible to everyday residents. Speaking personally, I am in the process of dropping my *Washington Post* subscription for many reasons, mainly that I find that Maryland-based journalism serves our communities far better. SB0459 recognizes the value of that work and ensures that State advertising dollars support the news organizations that keep Marylanders informed.

This bill aligns with the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our work depends on accurate, accessible reporting so that residents can understand what their government is doing and how to engage with it. When local news organizations struggle, the public loses a critical source of information. SB0459 helps sustain the outlets that make civic participation possible. For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB0459.

**BPM WYPR FAV Testimony SB459 02\_16\_26.pdf**

Uploaded by: David Belew

Position: FAV



FAV: Senate Bill 459

02/16/2026

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget & Taxation  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Guzzone,

On behalf of Baltimore Public Media, the proud producer of Maryland's NPR member station WYPR, I write in support of Senate Bill 459 and to express our sincere appreciation for the proposed amendments that broaden the definition of "local news organizations" to include public media during this critical time for our sector.

We are grateful to Vice Chair Rosapepe and the Committee for recognizing that Maryland's local journalism ecosystem includes newspapers, digital outlets, and locally operated public radio and public television stations that together inform communities across the state. The proposed amendments reflect the way Marylanders access trusted news and ensure that public policy strengthens the full spectrum of local journalism.

At a time when newsrooms across the country are shrinking and communities are experiencing the effects of news deserts, this legislation represents an important commitment to sustaining independent, community-based reporting. Public media plays a unique role within that ecosystem. We provide free, universally accessible journalism—on air and online—reaching urban, suburban, and rural residents alike. Importantly, public media operates under a nonprofit model that reinvests resources directly into journalism and public service. State advertising support does not simply purchase audience impressions; it helps sustain reporters, editors, producers, and technical staff who are dedicated to serving the public interest.

This inclusion is especially important in light of the recent rescission of federal funding for public broadcasting, which has placed significant strain on stations nationwide, including here in Maryland. At the same time, journalists across the country are operating in an environment of heightened polarization and increasing pressure on the freedom and independence of the press. In such moments, strong local institutions rooted in community trust are essential. Supporting public media as part of our diverse news ecosystem helps ensure that Maryland residents continue to have access to independent, fact-based reporting that serves the public—not partisan or commercial interests.



We appreciate the Vice Chair Rosapepe's leadership and the Committee's thoughtful consideration of the proposed amendments that make this bill more inclusive and more effective. If passed into law, Senate Bill 459 will help ensure that Maryland residents have access to strong, independent local journalism for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'David Belew' with a long, sweeping underline.

David Belew  
Director of Development  
Baltimore Public Media

**FNP Favorable SB 459 final.pdf**

Uploaded by: Geordie Wilson

Position: FAV

## FREDERICK NEWS POST

To: Budget & Tax Committee

From: Geordie Wilson, Publisher

Date: February 15, 2026

**Re: Frederick News Post FAVORABLE SB 459**

On behalf of **The Frederick News-Post**, we respectfully express our strong support for SB 459, a revenue-neutral policy to ensure that 50 percent of state advertising dollars are spent in Maryland with capable Maryland media companies.

This is a policy that both improves public communication efforts, by leveraging the unique local knowledge of trusted community media companies, and that strengthens the local information infrastructure Maryland communities rely on.

### **Why SB 459 Matters to Local News**

The economic foundation that once sustained local news — particularly advertising revenue — has shifted dramatically over the past two decades. A 2022 U.S. Government Accountability Office report documented long-term declines in advertising revenue and newsroom employment at local newspapers nationwide, resulting in reduced coverage in many communities. Maryland is fortunate that every jurisdiction still has a local news outlet. That is not a guarantee for the future.

When state advertising dollars are directed to Maryland-based media organizations, those dollars support:

- Reporters covering local government and public safety
- Editors ensuring accuracy and accountability
- Photographers, designers, and digital producers
- Printing, production, and distribution jobs
- Sales and marketing professionals who serve local businesses

Keeping advertising investments in Maryland strengthens local employment and preserves independent coverage that residents depend on.

### **About The Frederick News-Post and its capabilities**

The Frederick News-Post has served the Frederick County region for generations, and it has long been known as a responsive local news organization with a professional newsroom dedicated to covering the local government, schools, courts, public safety, business, and community life.

Today, it is also a modern media company with a full-service digital marketing agency that works with businesses and public institutions across Maryland.

As our industry has changed and the needs of our advertising customers have changed, we have adapted and developed a comprehensive suite of marketing and advertising services. Today, we place advertising in countless different mediums and channels — not just Frederick News Post products.

Our capabilities include:

- Print display advertising, of course, including inserts and custom print publications

- A full range of digital display advertising capabilities, from preferred placements on local media sites to targeted programmatic campaigns, including geographic, interest and demographic targeting, that reach readers across broad networks
- Digital audio and video campaigns, allowing us to reach users of streaming audio and video services, set-top boxes, and even outdoor screens at places like gas stations
- High-quality, opt-in email marketing campaigns, reaching people based on geographic, interest and demographic characteristics
- Social media advertising and strategy
- Search engine marketing (SEM), search engine optimization (SEO), and now generative engine optimization (GEO) to work with new artificial intelligence agents
- Full campaign integrations including custom landing pages, retargeting, and website development
- Event production and marketing, and community sponsorships
- Direct mail marketing
- Sophisticated campaign analytics, reporting, and performance optimization

We routinely design, execute, and measure multi-platform campaigns tailored to specific audiences. We understand local demographics, regional media consumption habits, and the communities that state agencies are trying to reach.

Any communications service currently procured from out-of-state agencies can be delivered effectively by Maryland-based news organizations — often with greater local insight and stronger audience trust.

### **Proven Models in Other Jurisdictions**

SB 459 is modeled on approaches adopted in other cities and states that prioritize community media for government advertising. For example, New York City implemented a program directing advertising to community outlets. A 2022 study found that 282 local print and digital outlets were approved to receive city advertising in fiscal year 2021, with funding distributed across small and mid-sized publications — revenue many would not otherwise have received.

These models demonstrate that targeted advertising policies can meaningfully support local media while helping governments better reach diverse communities.

SB 459's requirement that at least 50 percent of state advertising spending prioritize Maryland-based media is not a handout, it is simply a procurement shift that creates a straightforward pathway for local outlets to serve as state vendors. News organizations like The Frederick News-Post already operate with the infrastructure, compliance capacity, and marketing expertise necessary to meet state procurement standards. We are ready to compete, to perform, and to deliver measurable results for Maryland agencies — while ensuring that public funds support Maryland jobs and Maryland communities.

SB 459 represents a practical, balanced approach that strengthens public communication and sustains the local news ecosystem at the same time.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

**FNP Favorable SB 459 final.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jim McLaughlin

Position: FAV

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SB 459 represents a practical, balanced approach that strengthens public communication and sustains the local news ecosystem at the same time.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

**MD SB0459 testimony Rebuild Local News.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lori Henson

Position: FAV

# REBUILD LOCAL NEWS

Maryland Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Committee:

My name is Lori Henson and I am a policy manager with Rebuild Local News. We are the leading nonpartisan nonprofit coalition representing 3,000 newsrooms and more than 15,000 journalists. We develop and advocate for effective public policies designed to strengthen community news and information. In that role, I ask you to advance SB0459, which requires government agencies to set aside half their discretionary advertising spending for local news outlets.

SB0459 takes a unique – and budget-neutral – approach to revitalizing local news. This bill would keep government agency advertising dollars circulating in local communities through newspapers, digital sites and public media that provide community news, rather than sending taxpayer money to out-of-state businesses like Google, Meta or national cable TV networks. Setting aside a portion of state advertising for community media is an innovative and smart policy approach that will ultimately allow Maryland's local news organizations to deepen and expand coverage of essential civic and community life across the state.

A similar municipal-level advertising set-aside approach is already showing substantial results for community and ethnic news outlets in New York City. In its first five years, the policy has directed more than \$72 million to local outlets in the city. Small publishers including the Haitian Times have been able to add staff and improve news coverage because of the additional revenue. There is no evidence that this harmed the city's ability to effectively get their messages out, and indeed in many cases they were able to better reach hard-to-reach audiences. The policy has also diversified the range of news outlets receiving advertising.

Maryland would lead the nation with a statewide government advertising set-aside approach; SB0459 would be the first bill of its kind to pass at the state level. What is also important about this bill is what it does not do. It does not require an increase in spending on government advertising. It merely prods state agencies to be intentional in spending half of its advertising locally. SB0459 does not impact how agencies advertise their messages – the content of government advertisements remains determined entirely by the state agencies in collaboration with their marketing and advertising professionals.

The bill also does not favor any particular news outlet. Further, it does not prevent agency staff from utilizing the full range of available media tools to promote programs and services..

# REBUILD LOCAL NEWS

Among local news outlets, agencies may still choose the media that best connects them with the audiences they want to reach – through newspapers and their websites, online-only news sites, local TV or local radio and broadcast stations. The bill preserves government agencies working through traditional advertising processes. Importantly, local news organizations will still have to compete for advertising dollars; this policy is not an entitlement. Local news outlets will have to provide up-to-date media kits and analytics, so that marketing professionals can make informed and strategic decisions about ad placements.

This policy did not develop in a vacuum; it is an innovative response to address the crisis faced by local news organizations and the communities they serve. A crisis that is by now well known, but that is ongoing, and a threat to our democracy. Small and medium sized communities, some of which are now news deserts are especially at risk of being left without a source of local news coverage. A recent study by Rebuild Local News and Muck Rack found that Maryland local news outlets are struggling to cover local communities, ranking 47th out of 50 states in the number of local journalists per 100,000 people. Fewer than 6 reporters, on average, are working to cover news for every 100,000 Maryland residents. According to the Medill Local News Initiative, in the decade between 2013 and 2023, Maryland lost more than two-thirds of its journalists – more than 2,000 newsroom jobs. Between 2023 and 2024 alone, the state saw a 15% decline in the number of daily and weekly newspapers.

Research shows that when a local news outlet closes, communities face higher borrowing costs, lower voter turnout, fewer choices of candidates on the ballot, more government waste and corruption and more corporate crime. Local news benefits communities in countless ways. SB0459 is a smart and tested approach to supporting Maryland's local news outlets. I urge the Committee to advance the bill, not just for the health of Maryland local news, but for the health of communities across Maryland.

Sincerely,

Lori Henson  
Policy manager  
Rebuild Local News

**MDDC Favorable SB459.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rebecca Snyder

Position: FAV



Maryland | Delaware | DC Press Association

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To: Budget & Tax Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, MDDC Press Association

Date: February 16, 2026

Re: **MDDC FAVORABLE SB 459**

The Maryland-Delaware-DC Press Association (MDDC) represents a diverse membership of news media organizations. Our membership includes large metro dailies such as *The Washington Post* and *The Baltimore Sun*, hometown newspapers such as *The Star Democrat* and *Dorchester Star*, specialty publications such as *The Daily Record* and *Baltimore Jewish Times*, and leading online news organizations such as *Baltimore Banner*, *Maryland Matters*, and *Baltimore Brew*. Our membership spans both for-profit and nonprofit models and reflects the full ecosystem of local journalism that Marylanders depend on every day.

We **strongly support SB 459**, which would prioritize local Maryland news organizations for advertising from Maryland state agencies. This bill is a **revenue-neutral approach** that keeps Maryland's advertising dollars in the state and strategically invests those funds in the **local information infrastructure** that serves every community across Maryland.

### Why SB 459 Matters

Local news organizations deliver trusted information that drives civic engagement, supports small businesses, and connects Maryland communities. However, the business model that once sustained local news — especially advertising revenue — has been profoundly disrupted in recent decades, contributing to closures and reduced coverage across the country. According to a comprehensive U.S. Government Accountability Office report, local newspapers have faced years of declining advertising and circulation revenues and significant newsroom layoffs. As a result, many communities lack robust journalism that supports accountability and civic participation. Maryland is lucky that every jurisdiction in the state has a local news outlet but this is not a guarantee.

SB 459 would help address these economic pressures by ensuring that **state advertising expenditures prioritize Maryland-based media**, helping to sustain jobs, journalism, and the local economies tied to the news ecosystem.

Maryland's local news organizations reach broad audiences across Maryland, the region and the country. Our members regularly place advertising that focuses on the needs of the client in print, insert, digital, programmatic, email, billboard, tv, radio, and direct mail marketing as well as events and sponsorships and other channels. Any product or service that Maryland's agencies are



**We believe a strong news media is central to a strong and open society.**

able to procure from out of state agencies and advertisers can be replicated by local news organizations.

### **Modeled on Proven Practices in Other Jurisdictions**

SB 459 draws on models from other cities and states that have successfully experimented with directing government advertising dollars toward community media. Cities like **New York City, Chicago, San Francisco**, and jurisdictions across the country have implemented targeted ad spending policies that allocate a portion of government advertising budgets to smaller local and community media outlets.

For example, a **2022 study of New York City's program** found that a total of **282 print and digital local outlets** were approved to receive city government advertising, with amounts ranging from a few hundred dollars to over \$1 million. This data shows that community media outlets are receiving ad revenue they otherwise would not have obtained, expanding their financial capacity and community reach. (CUNY study excerpt, FY2021 results)

### **Benefits of Targeted Government Advertising**

- 1. Strengthens Local Media Financial Health without New Taxes**

Ad set-aside programs leverage funds already allocated for government advertising and redirect them to **community media that serve Maryland residents**. Redirecting existing ad spending helps sustain newsroom jobs and local operations without increasing the state budget.

- 2. Expands Reach into Underserved Communities**

Local and community media often have deeper trust and engagement with diverse audiences, including rural, low-income, and minority populations. Targeted government advertising ensures that government communications **reach all residents effectively** while strengthening outlets that provide culturally relevant reporting.

- 3. Promotes Civic Engagement and Information Access**

Research shows that local news supports civic awareness, voter participation, and government accountability. Policies that support newsrooms help counteract the decline in local reporting caused by digital ad displacement and market consolidation. Public policy approaches — including advertising support — are widely seen as an important tool for bolstering local journalism ecosystems.

- 4. Encourages Better Targeted Advertising Spend**

By prioritizing local media, state agencies are likely to receive **more effective and locally targeted advertising placements**. Local outlets understand regional markets and audience behavior better than national platforms, potentially improving the return on advertising investments.

SB 459 creates a **clear, straightforward mechanism** for local media to become state advertising vendors. Requiring that a **minimum of 50% of state advertising budgets prioritize Maryland-based media outlets** will help stabilize local news organizations while improving the reach and relevance of public information campaigns. Several local news organizations — including MDDC and its members — offer **full-service advertising capabilities** across print, digital, broadcast, email, programmatic, and sponsorship channels, and routinely partner with clients of all sizes to execute effective marketing strategies.

SB 459 represents a **practical, revenue-neutral policy** that strengthens Maryland's news ecosystem, supports economic activity tied to local journalism jobs, and ensures that state advertising investments benefit Maryland audiences and communities. The experience of other jurisdictions indicates that targeted government advertising is a viable strategy for sustaining and diversifying local media revenue.

We respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 459.

# **2026 Testimony -- MDCD Broadcasters Association --**

Uploaded by: Timothy Nelson

Position: FAV



**To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**From: Tim Nelson, Counsel to the Maryland-DC-Delaware Broadcasters Association**

**Date: Submitted - February 16, 2026; Hearing - February 18, 2026**

**Re: Senate Bill 459**

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The Maryland-DC-Delaware Broadcasters Association (“MDCD” or the “Association”)<sup>1</sup> appreciates the opportunity to submit this written testimony regarding Senate Bill 459, “Procurement - Advertising - Local News Organizations (Local Newspapers for Maryland Communities Act of 2026),” which legislation would require that units of State government spend 50% of their digital and print advertising expenditures with local news organizations. On behalf of the Association and its Members, which include approximately 20 television stations and 110 radio stations, MDCD urges a favorable report of Senate Bill 459.

As you may know, each MDCD Member broadcast station is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission and is required, pursuant to that license, to operate in and serve the public interest. MDCD’s Member stations embrace that mandate with passion and enthusiasm. Not only do MDCD’s Member stations provide critical news, weather, emergency, sports, traffic, health, and other information both on-air and online, they also participate in and sponsor events in the very communities in which their employees live and work. Yet local broadcasters face significant challenges as they aim to fulfill their unique role in the rapidly changing media ecosystem—many of them financial.

Producing high-quality, local broadcast news is an exceedingly costly endeavor. Broadcasters fund their on-air and digital operations through advertising dollars; advertising accounts for virtually all of the revenues for Maryland’s radio stations and roughly half of the revenues for the State’s television stations. Advertising revenues, however, have been declining sharply for years. The revolution in digital technology and the explosive growth of the Internet have led to a handful of giant, unregulated digital platforms dominating the advertising marketplace, including at the local level. This, in turn, has negatively impacted local broadcasters from a competitive standpoint. Advertisers and the critical revenues they provide to local stations have been diverted away from the broadcasters and local news organizations that produce accurate, trusted, objective, local journalism in communities across Maryland.

Senate Bill 459, by requiring units of State government to spend 50% of their print and digital advertising budget with local news organizations, appears designed to direct certain revenues into local newsrooms. That investment, in turn, will aid local journalism across

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<sup>1</sup> The Maryland-DC-Delaware Broadcasters Association is a voluntary, non-profit trade association that advocates for the interests of its member radio and television stations and, more generally, the interests of broadcasting in Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C.

Maryland, to the benefit of the State's citizens. Indeed, Senate Bill 459 is an investment in local news and communities across Maryland.

The Maryland-DC-Delaware Broadcasters Association appreciates Senator Rosapepe's leadership on this issue, and for the reasons set forth above, MDCD urges a favorable report of Senate Bill 459.

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**SB0459\_Cross\_Testimony favorable with amendments.p**

Uploaded by: Dr Cashenna A Cross

Position: FWA

## **Testimony in Support with Amendments Senate Bill 459 - Local Newspapers for Maryland Communities Act of 2026**

Good afternoon Chair, Vice Chair, and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is The Honorable Dr. Cashenna A. Cross, Councilwoman at Large for the City of Glenarden, United States Air Force veteran, and longtime municipal and community advocate. I respectfully offer testimony in support of Senate Bill 459 with targeted amendments to ensure the legislation strengthens local journalism while preserving responsible procurement practices for state and local government.

Local news organizations serve as one of the last remaining trusted connectors between government and community. In municipalities like mine, local reporting informs residents about public safety, economic development, youth opportunities, and civic participation. When local journalism declines, transparency declines, misinformation increases, and civic engagement suffers. This bill recognizes that public communication dollars should help sustain credible local reporting that directly serves Maryland residents.

From a municipal governance perspective, clear and accessible communication is essential to public trust. As a public servant who has worked across military, local government, and community leadership roles, I have seen firsthand how local publications provide accountability and ensure residents understand how policies affect their daily lives. Supporting Maryland based news organizations helps keep information local, relevant, and responsive.

While the intent of the bill is strong, several provisions require refinement to avoid unintended impacts on procurement flexibility and operational efficiency. A mandatory fifty percent procurement goal, without implementation safeguards, may create compliance challenges for agencies whose outreach needs vary significantly depending on mission, audience, or emergency communication requirements.

### Recommended Amendments:

- 1 Provide phased implementation over multiple fiscal years to allow agencies to adjust procurement planning.
- 2 Allow a waiver or hardship exception when agencies demonstrate that specialized outreach requires broader advertising markets.
- 3 Clarify reporting standards so agencies measure outcomes based on audience reach and effectiveness, not only spending percentages.
- 4 Ensure small and minority owned local media outlets have equitable access through transparent procurement guidance.
- 5 Require periodic legislative review to evaluate effectiveness and fiscal impact after implementation.

With these amendments, Senate Bill 459 can both strengthen Maryland local journalism and maintain responsible stewardship of public resources. This balanced approach supports transparency, protects taxpayer value, and reinforces the role of trusted local media as a pillar of democratic engagement. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report with amendments.

Respectfully submitted, The Honorable Dr. Cashenna A. Cross Councilwoman at Large, City of Glenarden Municipal Advocate United States Air Force Veteran

**SB0459 - LOI - TSO - Procurement – Advertising – L**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

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February 18, 2026

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget & Taxation Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

***Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 459 – Procurement – Advertising – Local News Organizations (Local Newspapers for Maryland Communities Act of 2026)***

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 459 but provides the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

SB 459 would require MDOT to structure procurement procedures to achieve an overall goal of 50% of the total dollar value of procurement contracts for print or digital advertising made directly to local news organizations.

MDOT rarely makes direct media buys for print or digital advertising because media buys are a pass-through expense in most MDOT advertising/marketing contracts. These digital media buys are made using Spotify, Facebook, Clear Channel, etc., which are not often Maryland-based firms. This bill would have a significant impact on digital advertising if pass-through media buys were subject to its requirements, as the digital advertising services that are the most effective, provide the most engagement, reach the most customers, and provide the best return on investment would no longer be options due to the “local” restriction. Additionally, many local news organizations utilize subscription-based paywalls, which can limit audience reach and constrain access to advertising placed on their sites.

SB 459 would require the Department to spend more overall dollars to ensure its messaging reaches the intended audiences; and those audiences who do not regularly consume information from local news organizations will not receive the message at all. This is especially true for the Maryland Port Administration and Maryland Aviation Administration, which are often targeting audiences from outside of Maryland and across the globe to compete with other U.S. ports and airports to bring additional business and economic growth to our state. Restrictions to “local media” may limit Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall’s and the Port of Baltimore’s ability to target customers beyond Maryland.

Additionally, the Motor Vehicle Administration’s (MVA) Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) invests over two million dollars in paid media each Federal Fiscal Year using funding

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Page Two

from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) grant program. Through MHSO's media and marketing contractor, which has office space and employees based in Maryland, the MHSO carefully researches and selects paid media tactics and platforms to effectively deliver safe-driving messages statewide using its NHTSA grant funding. These messaging campaigns leverage a mix of paywall-free digital platforms, including social media networks, local radio, television, and billboard advertising, ensuring broad visibility and reach to target audiences. These campaigns are an important tool in reaching Vision Zero, the goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on Maryland's roadways by 2030. A diverse mix of media platforms is essential to ensuring these critical safety messages reach the entire population.

As noted, the Department does not currently issue procurements for advertising. If required to do so, MDOT would need to establish a procurement specific to advertising, which, given current procurement timelines, would not be in place by October 1, 2026. In addition, a stand-alone procurement of direct media costs may not be of interest to marketing agencies since it is primarily a direct cost pass-through and would create an unnecessary delay.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 459.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090