

SENATE BILL 459

P2

6lr1389
CF HB 43

By: ~~Senator Rosapepe~~ **Senators Rosapepe, Augustine, Guzzone, Hettleman, King,
Lewis Young, McCray, and Zucker**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2026

A

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 3, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Procurement – Advertising – ~~Local~~ Maryland News Organizations**
3 **(~~Local Newspapers~~ News for Maryland Communities Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a unit of State government to ensure that at least a certain
5 amount of the unit's total dollar value of procurement contracts for ~~print and digital~~
6 advertising is being made directly to ~~local~~ Maryland news organizations; authorizing
7 a unit of State government to consult with a certain organization under certain
8 circumstances; and generally relating to procurement contracts made to ~~local~~
9 Maryland news organizations.

10 BY adding to
11 Article – State Finance and Procurement
12 Section 14–419
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – State Finance and Procurement**

18 **14–419.**

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 459 as amended by SB0459/453929/1 04/07/26 at 11:43 AM

1 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION, "~~LOCAL~~ MARYLAND NEWS ORGANIZATION"
2 MEANS AN ENTITY THAT:

3 (I) ENGAGES PROFESSIONALS TO CREATE, EDIT, PRODUCE,
4 AND DISTRIBUTE ORIGINAL CONTENT CONCERNING MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST
5 THROUGH REPORTING, CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS, OBSERVING CURRENT EVENTS,
6 OR ANALYZING INFORMATION;

7 (II) HAS AT LEAST ONE FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEE WHO:

8 1. ~~IS EMPLOYED FULL TIME;~~

9 ~~2.~~ IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING COVERAGE OF EVENTS
10 IN MARYLAND; AND

11 ~~3.~~ 2. RESIDES IN MARYLAND OR WITHIN 50 MILES OF
12 MARYLAND;

13 (III) IN THE CASE OF A PRINT PUBLICATION, HAS PUBLISHED AT
14 LEAST ONE PRINT PUBLICATION PER MONTH OVER THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS AND:

15 1. HOLDS A VALID U.S. POSTAL SERVICE PERIODICAL
16 PERMIT; OR

17 2. HAS AT LEAST 25% OF ITS CONTENT DEDICATED TO
18 ~~LOCAL~~ MARYLAND NEWS;

19 (IV) IN THE CASE OF AN ENTITY THAT PUBLISHES CONTENT
20 ONLY IN DIGITAL FORM:

21 1. HAS PUBLISHED AT LEAST ONE PIECE ABOUT EVENTS
22 IN MARYLAND PER WEEK OVER THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS; AND

23 2. FOR WHICH AT LEAST 33% OF ITS AUDIENCE,
24 AVERAGED OVER A 12-MONTH PERIOD, IS LOCATED IN MARYLAND;

25 (V) HAS DISCLOSED, IN ITS PRINT PUBLICATION OR ON ITS
26 WEBSITE:

27 1. ITS BENEFICIAL OWNERS; OR

28 2. IN THE CASE OF A NONPROFIT ENTITY, ITS BOARD OF
29 DIRECTORS; ~~AND~~

1 (VI) IN THE CASE OF AN ENTITY THAT MAINTAINS TAX STATUS
2 UNDER § 501(C)(3) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE, ~~AND IS NOT AN ENTITY~~
3 ~~DESCRIBED IN ITEM (III) OR (IV) OF THIS PARAGRAPH:~~

4 1. HAS DECLARED COVERAGE OF ~~LOCAL OR STATE~~
5 ~~MARYLAND~~ NEWS AS ITS STATED MISSION IN A FILING WITH THE INTERNAL
6 REVENUE SERVICE; OR

7 2. HAS RECEIVED A COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT FROM
8 THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING PRIOR TO 2026; AND

9 (VII) AN ENTITY THAT:

10 1. IS A BROADCAST STATION AS DEFINED UNDER
11 SECTION 3 OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934; AND

12 2. HAS A COMMUNITY LICENSE IN MARYLAND ASSIGNED
13 BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

14 (2) “~~LOCAL~~ MARYLAND NEWS ORGANIZATION” DOES NOT INCLUDE
15 AN ENTITY THAT RECEIVES MORE THAN 50% OF ITS GROSS RECEIPTS FROM:

16 (i) A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION DESCRIBED IN 26 U.S.C. § 527;
17 OR

18 (ii) ANY ORGANIZATION THAT MAINTAINS STATUS UNDER 26
19 U.S.C. § 501(C)(4), (5), OR (6).

20 (B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY PROCUREMENT CONTRACT FOR
21 ~~PRINT OR DIGITAL ADVERTISING TO BE PUBLISHED OR BROADCAST WITH THE~~
22 ~~PRIMARY AUDIENCE FOCUS OUTSIDE OF~~ MARYLAND FOR THE PURPOSES OF:

23 (1) PROMOTING TOURISM TO THE STATE; ~~OR~~

24 (2) EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT; OR

25 (3) ECONOMIC INVESTMENT.

26 (C) (1) A UNIT SHALL STRUCTURE PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES TO
27 ACHIEVE AN OVERALL GOAL OF 50% OF THE UNIT’S TOTAL DOLLAR VALUE OF
28 PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS FOR ~~PRINT OR DIGITAL~~ ADVERTISING BEING MADE
29 DIRECTLY TO ~~LOCAL~~ MARYLAND NEWS ORGANIZATIONS.

4 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 459 as amended by SB0459/453929/1 04/07/26 at 11:43 AM

1 (2) A UNIT SHALL PRIORITIZE THE USE OF MARYLAND NEWS
2 ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE A PRIMARY MISSION OF REPORTING ON AND SERVING
3 UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN MARYLAND.

4 (D) A UNIT MAY CONSULT WITH A THIRD-PARTY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
5 TO PREPARE AND MAINTAIN A LIST OF ELIGIBLE LOCAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS
6 UNDER THIS SECTION.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.