

SENATE BILL 459

P2

(6lr1389)

ENROLLED BILL

— Budget and Taxation / Government, Labor, and Elections —

Introduced by ~~Senator Rosapepe~~ Senators Rosapepe, Augustine, Guzzone, Hettleman, King, Lewis Young, McCray, and Zucker

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this _____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

President.

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber / conference committee amendments.



(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

Article – State Finance and Procurement

14-419.

**(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION, “~~LOCAL~~ MARYLAND NEWS ORGANIZATION”
MEANS AN ENTITY THAT:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 (V) HAS DISCLOSED, IN ITS PRINT PUBLICATION OR ON ITS
4 WEBSITE:

5 1. ITS BENEFICIAL OWNERS; OR

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

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

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

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

16 (VII) AN ENTITY THAT:

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

19 2. HAS A COMMUNITY LICENSE IN MARYLAND ASSIGNED
20 BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

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

23 (I) A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION DESCRIBED IN 26 U.S.C. § 527;
24 OR

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

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

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

2 (2) EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT; OR

3 (3) ECONOMIC INVESTMENT.

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

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

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

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

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.