



# Submission from Torstar Corporation

House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage  
Study on the State of the Journalism and Media Sectors

## Our News Brands

A grid of logos for various news brands and websites owned by Torstar. The logos are arranged in three rows. The first row features the Toronto Star and Metroland. The second row features The Hamilton Spectator, Waterloo Region Record, and The Peterborough Examiner. The third row features Niagara Falls Review, The Standard, and Welland Tribune. Below these are four columns of website URLs, each preceded by a green circle icon. The first column includes BramptonGuardian.com, FlamboroughReview.com, Mississauga.com, NiagaraThisWeek.com, and ParrySound.com. The second column includes CaledonEnterprise.com, GuelphMercuryTribune.com, MuskokaRegion.com, NorthBayNipissing.com, and Sagem.ca. The third column includes CambridgeTimes.ca, InsideHalton.com, MyKawartha.com, NorthumberlandNews.com, and Simcoe.com. The fourth column includes DurhamRegion.com, InsideOttawaValley.com, NewHamburgIndependent.ca, Orangeville.com, and TheIFP.ca. At the bottom, there are logos for TORONTO.COM, WaterlooChronicle.ca, and YorkRegion.com.

**TORONTO STAR** **metroland**

**THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR** **WATERLOO REGION RECORD** **THE PETERBOROUGH EXAMINER**

**NIAGARA FALLS REVIEW** **The Standard** **WELLAND TRIBUNE**

**BramptonGuardian.com** **CaledonEnterprise.com** **CambridgeTimes.ca** **DurhamRegion.com**

**FlamboroughReview.com** **GuelphMercuryTribune.com** **InsideHalton.com** **InsideOttawaValley.com**

**Mississauga.com** **MuskokaRegion.com** **MyKawartha.com** **NewHamburgIndependent.ca**

**NiagaraThisWeek.com** **NorthBayNipissing.com** **NorthumberlandNews.com** **Orangeville.com**

**ParrySound.com** **Sagem.ca** **Simcoe.com** **TheIFP.ca**

**TORONTO.COM** **WaterlooChronicle.ca** **YorkRegion.com**



## Who we are

- Torstar Corporation is the parent company of the *Toronto Star*, six daily and four monthly newspapers, and over 55 community news brands serving readers in Ontario and across Canada. We employ over 600 staff, including approximately 350 journalists and editorial staff, and work with a diverse range of freelance contributors.
- We are primarily a written news company, distributing daily news, opinion, features and investigations across a network of owned and third-party channels. We also produce podcasts, videos, interactive digital media, custom content and live events.
- We are 100% Canadian owned and controlled, with independent ownership free from vertical integration with related businesses. We hold a 33% ownership share of the Canadian Press. We champion Canadian journalism with a range of partners.

## Foreword

We are grateful for the opportunity to have appeared before the Standing Committee, and to make this submission for your consideration.

Torstar is committed to helping develop public policies that promote a plural and free press in a strong, united, and independent Canada.

Humbly submitted,

Jordan Bitove  
Owner, Torstar Corporation  
Publisher, *Toronto Star*

Angus Frame  
President, Torstar Corporation

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**Recommendation 1:** To address structural problems facing Canada’s news sector, most notably market failures caused by U.S. Big Tech’s monopolies:

- Maintain and reinforce the Online News Act
- Properly resource competition investigations and enforcement
- Enact pro-competition and anti-monopoly legislation and regulation
- Support Canadian alternatives to foreign monopolies

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**Recommendation 2:** To ensure the news media can continue to meet Canadians’ information needs amid growing uncertainty and instability:

- Maintain the Journalism Labour Tax Credit at current levels
- Renew the Local Journalism Initiative beyond the end of 2026
- Explore demand-side measures, such as news vouchers

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**Recommendations 3 & 4:** To define and assert Canada’s interests in the face of U.S. Big Tech’s ongoing multi-dimensional extraction of wealth, data, and tax dollars:

- Launch a Parliamentary study to evaluate, publicize, and reduce more than \$4 billion a year in federal benefits to U.S. Big Tech
- Close the loophole subsidizing U.S. Big Tech ads by \$2.2 billion a year
- Extend the ‘Buy Canadian’ policy to federal advertising

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**Recommendation 5:** To promote trust, transparency, healthy debate and continuous improvement of federal public supports to news media:

- Review and reform how the government provides information about the problems, policies, programs, and outcomes they aim to address

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# General Comments & Recommendations

## Creating fair digital markets for a free, plural press

To reach a Canadian audience, any Canadian news publisher, large or small -- and even individual journalists -- must pass through intermediaries controlled by U.S. Big Tech. A handful of companies largely control flows of information, news, and traffic as well as the ability of Canadian publishers to monetize these flows through advertising and subscriptions. U.S. Big Tech extracts considerable value and can set the terms in Canadian digital markets essential for news distribution, including online search, digital advertising, social media, Generative AI, audio and video distribution, and mobile applications.

Google provides examples across several of these markets. Due to Google's dominance over several stages of the digital advertising supply chain, \$1 spent by an advertiser to reach news readers becomes on average only \$0.51 in publisher revenue, according to a U.K. study.<sup>1</sup> [U.S. courts have ruled](#) that Google maintains illegal monopolies and engages in anti-competitive practices which experts believe have deprived publishers of billions of dollars in revenues.<sup>2</sup>

Google is translating its dominance over online search into an advantage in Generative AI. The company's search crawler scrapes news publishers' sites, including paywall-protected articles, to feed AI Overviews and summaries through Chrome's new Google Lens feature. News publishers like Torstar cannot block Google's multi-use bot without being delisted from Google Search. The UK's competition regulator found that Google has "[substantial and entrenched market power](#)" and has [proposed several remedies](#) to promote fair competition.

U.S. Big Tech has acquired its control over our information environment through years of well-documented acquisitions, anti-competitive practices, abuses of dominance, network effects, changing content policies and business practices, permissive regulation, inducements, co-option, and coercion -- *not* merely through technological innovation and changing consumer habits.<sup>3</sup>

Canadian policymakers grappling with how to create fair digital markets and ensure a strong, free, plural press must start with this premise. Even the most nimble and novel Canadian news business faces the constraints, challenges, and uncertainties of market failures caused by U.S. Big Tech's monopolies.

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<sup>1</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers for ISBA and AOP, [Programmatic Supply Chain Transparency Study](#), 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Tech Policy Press, [How Google Manipulated Digital Ad Prices and Hurt Publishers per DOJ](#), 2023; CBC News, [Google has illegal monopoly in online ad tech](#), 2025; Courtney Radsch, [Google broke the law. It's time to break up the company](#), The Guardian, 2025.

<sup>3</sup> See Giblin & Doctorow, *Chokepoint Capitalism: How Big Tech & Big Content Captured Creative Labor Markets and How We'll Win Them Back*, 2022; and McChesney, *Digital Disconnect: How Capitalism is Turning the Internet Against Democracy*, 2013.

By way of analogy, a master farmer can produce the world's finest apple. But if a global monopoly owns the only road to town, can charge any toll they like, block the truck, or decide to swap candy for fruit, the problem is not with the farmer's business model. You don't tell the farmer to innovate; you fix the road.

In short, the most significant driving factors behind the media crisis are structural, and demand structural solutions. Canada must tackle foreign monopolies in concert with like-minded democracies. To restore fair, working and competitive digital markets, Canada must:

- Vigorously enforce competition law to combat abuse of dominance and anti-competitive practices, particularly in search, ad tech, digital advertising, and Generative AI, and ensure those harmed by the conduct can get meaningful redress.
- Embrace and embed pro-competition principles in media and digital policies
- Build Canadian alternatives to U.S. Big Tech, including those which are decentralized, open, and network-based, so that power cannot concentrate in a handful of firms
- Fairly tax U.S. Big Tech where they profit from Canadian markets, to create fairness with Canadian companies, and to allow re-investment in public goods and infrastructure (see Recommendations #2 and 3)

If Canada retreats or allows these efforts to stall, we will soon face a world where news media cannot compete, succeed and sustain ourselves on the merits of our work.

**Recommendation 1:** The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage should recommend that the Government of Canada:

- Maintain and reinforce the Online News Act, and not concede or undermine the Act under pressure from the U.S. and its Big Tech firms
- Provide adequate resources for the Competition Bureau's investigation into Google's ad tech monopolies, and for the Minister of Industry to direct the Bureau to conduct a market inquiry into online search and Generative AI
- Ensure that future legislation addressing digital and AI markets in general (framework legislation) or news media specifically (sectoral legislation) reduces the power of U.S. Big Tech over Canada's free press, while supporting competition and growth of Canadian-owned and controlled alternatives

## Protecting Canadian journalism as a public good

We agree that journalism is a public good, producing positive externalities beyond those who choose to pay for and consume it. All Canadians are made better off by the existence of a strong, free, and plural press, regardless of whether they pay for news. A single journalist covering a municipal council, a hospital, school board, or local development project ensures accountability and promotes ethical governance in ways that cannot be readily quantified.

According to the [2024 Reuters Institute Digital News Report](#), only 15% of Canadians pay for online news. Canadians rank first of surveyed countries for the share subscribing to foreign titles, and second for paying discounted (rather than full) rates. Most Canadians (86%) do not pay for online news. Among non-payers, appetite for spending is low: 50% refuse to pay anything at all, 25% would pay less than \$5 a month, and 10% would only pay \$1 or less.

Canadian news media face an underdeveloped subscriptions market and a digital advertising market captured by Meta and Google. These are challenging economics for funding journalism to cover city halls, elections, courts, public policy, development projects, the education system, public health, climate, local businesses and the like. Loss of news jobs and outlets reduces coverage, leaving public and private power with fewer checks, and depriving Canadians of the information they need in their everyday lives as citizens, consumers, and workers. Public support for journalism helps ensure that public needs are fulfilled.

In our view, journalism as public good – as vital input to democracy and trustworthy source of information – faces a serious threat from the environment in which Canadians encounter, consume, discuss, and share it. Our information environment is largely [under foreign control](#), overtaken by U.S. Big Tech firms who have reshaped it [according to their priorities](#), which in [some cases](#) appears to include [eroding or extinguishing](#) Canadian sovereignty.

U.S. Big Tech firms' conduct runs counter to efforts to build a healthy, sovereign and secure information environment in Canada. They seek to maximize engagement and control over audiences, traffic, and information flows. They are either agnostic to information's quality and veracity – or actively try to shape it, profiting by amplifying controversy, toxicity, and abuse. Meta and X (Twitter) block or deprioritize news and encourage its displacement by alternative sources including influencers, partisan media, bots and synthetic media. Threats, harassment, and violence against journalists are on the rise. Large AI companies' use of our journalism extracts value, degrades trust, and severs our relationships to our publics.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Owen and Bridgman, *AI News Audit: How AI Models Use and Distribute Canadian Journalism*. Media Ecosystem Observatory, 2026.

Overcoming the degradation of Canada’s information environment is challenging for our country, let alone for any single news company. While these structural problems are resolved, it is in the public interest to sustain the practice and production of Canadian journalism. Doing so will ensure news media can continue to meet Canadians’ needs for reliable, relevant, and trustworthy information amid growing global and domestic instability.

**Recommendation 2:** The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage should recommend to the Government of Canada to maintain existing supports for Canadian journalism, including LJI, while structural reforms are implemented to address market failures. Priority should be given to maintaining the Journalism Labour Tax Credit at current rates, as the most significant measure to support journalistic employment and the production of original written news. Demand-side measures, especially news vouchers, are worth exploring to help Canadians pay for news, increase competition and dynamism in the market.

## Auditing and reducing federal benefits to U.S. Big Tech

Federal supports for Canadian news media have been the subject of years of study, debate, and analysis in Parliament, by government, and a wide range of independent analysts and interested parties. What is far less well-known is how U.S. Big Tech benefits from federal policy and administration. Canadian news media compete with and are increasingly dependent on these companies for attention, traffic, and advertising revenue.

All told, U.S. Big Tech benefits from billions of dollars of public money every year, vastly eclipsing federal supports for Canadian news media. These benefits take the form of subsidies, tax breaks, and contracts to companies including Google, Meta, Amazon, and Microsoft. The government releases only limited data, allowing partial accounting. The below table summarizes benefits to U.S. Big Tech from four federal measures:

Benefit to U.S. Big Tech	Value
<b>Federal subsidy for advertising</b> Well-documented loophole in section 19.1 of the Income Tax Act subsidizes advertising on U.S. Big Tech platforms	<b>\$2.2 billion in 2025-26</b> Source: <a href="#">2025 estimate by the Parliamentary Budget Officer</a>
<b>Federal tax break due to DST repeal</b> Unlike Canadian companies, U.S. Big Tech pays minimal corporate income tax on over \$46 billion in annual digital services revenue from Canada.	<b>\$1.2 billion in 2025-26</b> Source: <a href="#">Parliamentary Budget Officer 2023 estimate</a>
<b>Federal contracts with U.S. Big Tech</b> Federal government procurements of digital services, software, and consulting, excluding hardware, capital purchases, and spending by transfer payment recipients.	<b>Over \$300 million in 2024-25</b> Source: <a href="#">Public Accounts of Canada 2025, Volume 3, Section 3</a>
<b>Federal digital advertising</b> Spending by the federal public sector including core federal public administration, agencies and Crown Corporations.	<b>Over \$100 million in 2025-26</b> Source: Estimate based on <a href="#">Annual Report on government advertising</a> and industry data via AdClarity
<b>Federal Benefits to U.S. Big Tech</b>	<b>Over \$3.8 billion a year</b>

Total benefits from federal policy and administration likely amount to tens of billions more at the expense of Canadian taxpayers. These include, for example:

- **Tax avoidance:** Billions of dollars in lost federal and provincial tax revenues due to U.S. Big Tech's base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) on Canadian revenues estimated at \$46 billion to upwards of \$90 billion a year<sup>5</sup>
  - The Digital Services Tax was meant to partly recoup these tax revenues given the failure of international tax reform in the face of U.S. opposition
- **Transfer payments:** Spending on U.S. Big Tech by federal transfer payment recipients, including federal agencies, Crown Corporations, provinces, territories, municipalities, non-profits and businesses could amount to \$4.5-7.5 billion a year (conservatively assuming a half share of 3-5% relevant spend on \$300 billion in annual federal transfers reported in [Public Accounts 2025, Vol. III](#))
  - No audit across the federal government and its transfer payments of public technology spending with foreign tech companies has ever been completed
- **Free content:** The federal government employs thousands of public servants in communications functions, many of whom manage, produce and post content for the [1,051 official Government of Canada social media channels](#).
  - The government is earning advertising revenue for U.S. Big Tech by using these channels to engage and distribute vital public information to Canadians
- **Free data:** Just as U.S. Big Tech scrapes and uses Canadian journalism, they have extensively used Government of Canada websites including high-quality translations, statistics, and information produced with taxpayer funding to develop their AI products, without compensation and in likely violation of Crown Copyright.<sup>6</sup>

Federal benefits to U.S. Big Tech will only increase in the years ahead, as federal Buy Canadian policies have had little to no impact. Those policies allow U.S. Big Tech firms to be suppliers for Canadian firms (e.g., via a media buying agency) or recognizes their subsidiaries as Canadian with merely a local address, even if only operating a sales office.

Much of the doubling of the federal advertising provided for in Budget 2025 (\$345 million over 4 years) is likely to go to U.S. Big Tech. Unlike Ontario, where the local media directive reinvests 25% of public advertising dollars into locally-owned news platforms – thereby strengthening the health and sovereignty of our information environment – federal policy does not recognize or prioritize Canadian ownership and control.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, [ICT services and digitally-deliverable services exports to Canada, 2024](#); and Global Media and Internet Concentration Project, [Canada's Network Media Economy: Growth, Concentration and Upheaval 1984-2024](#), 2025.

<sup>6</sup> For example, the latest [2026 Common Crawl dataset](#) used to train LLMs contains 1.24 million pages from .ca domains, all operated by federal and provincial governments. Federal sites account for 286,000 scraped pages.

Public opinion research shows strong support for a change in policy. Most Canadians (85%) agree that it is more important than ever for Canada to have a strong and independent news media that tells our stories to Canadians. A similar number (83%) would like to see the federal government bringing in a “Buy Canadian” rule for government ad spending.<sup>7</sup>

Existing federal benefits for U.S. Big Tech and their ongoing monopolization of Canada’s digital markets are impoverishing the economic foundations for Canadian journalism and culture. If Canada allows our digital economy to fall under total foreign dominance we risk losing not only our free press, but our political and cultural sovereignty, and our economic prosperity in the digital and AI age.

**Recommendation 3:** Given U.S. Big Tech’s massive ongoing extraction of public funds and tax revenues, as well as hostile U.S. policy which has enforced and maintained this extraction in the context of the review of CUSMA, we recommend that:

- The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage undertake a joint study with the Standing Committees on Finance, Public Accounts, Government Operations and Estimates, and International Trade, to investigate, audit, and publish a full and transparent accounting of benefits to U.S. Big Tech arising from federal policy and administration, and make recommendations to the Government of Canada on how to restore value and fairness for Canadian taxpayers, workers, and businesses.
- This study should consider and make public information on all direct and indirect benefits to U.S. Big Tech, including via subsidies, tax breaks, loopholes, contracts, supplier relationships, direct operations, and by transfer payment recipients.
- This study should be put into context of all sectors of Canada’s digital markets that are dominated by U.S. Big Tech monopolies and oligopolies (e.g., online search, digital advertising, social media, Generative AI, cloud computing and storage, mobile applications, audio and video distribution, payments, productivity software, desktop and mobile hardware, enterprise hardware and software).

**Recommendation 4:** To help build a sovereign information ecosystem and bolster Canada’s free press, we recommend that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage recommend that the Government of Canada:

- Implement a ‘Buy Canadian’ policy for advertising by the federal government and public sector, prioritizing Canadian owned and controlled media and platforms
- Close the loophole in the Income Tax Act which provides a \$2.2 billion taxpayer-funded subsidy for digital advertising on U.S. Big Tech platforms

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<sup>7</sup> Ipsos Global Public Affairs, [Buy Canadian survey](#). October 10-14, 2025. (n=1,002)

## Promoting openness, accountability, and public trust

We are sensitive to some Canadians' concerns that public funding for journalism can create real or perceived influence, either of which can negatively impact public trust. However, we disagree that public support is the main factor behind reports that this is taking place. All around the Western world, public trust in institutions, including democracy, government, and professional news media is declining. Rising inequality, polarization, uncertainty and social strain are far greater factors driving declining trust than any single policy. Notably, countries with the highest trust in news [as measured by the Reuters Institute](#) – such as Finland, Denmark, Norway – also have extensive public supports for news media.

As a society, we provide public funding for a range of functions which we expect to be independent and professional – judges, prosecutors, police; teachers and educators, for example. We must always be vigilant, scrutinizing, criticizing, and improving media and digital policies to address evidence of real or perceived influence over news and journalism. Our journalists' mission to hold power to account, report without fear or favour, and serve all Canadians demands the highest possible standards of integrity and independence.

The economic challenges facing news media have undoubtedly impacted public trust as outlets have closed and journalists have been forced to do more with less. Whereas in the past even small communities often had several competing outlets whose journalists were familiar fixtures of community life, now many communities are news deserts at worst, or underserved at best. Exemplary journalism could cement a journalist or outlet's reputation, community ties, and economic fortunes. Nowadays, it is harder than ever to break through and generate resources to pay for even the best journalism.

Despite these challenges, Canadians still have considerable trust in daily written news reported by professional journalists. Five times more Canadians say they have high trust in the news and information we produce compared to what they find on social media. Our trust advantage holds across all age groups, genders, education level, Indigenous identity, immigration status, visible or sexual minority status, and across both urban and rural areas.<sup>8</sup> During the 2025 federal election, more Canadians turned to written news sites, apps and newspapers than any other source.<sup>9</sup>

We work hard to maintain public trust. Our editorial coverage continues to be critical of all orders of government. We are committed above all else to rigorously applying and

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<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada, [Trust in news or information from media by gender and other selected sociodemographic characteristics](#), [Rating of 8, 9, or 10 for social media vs. print media]. 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Pollara, [Trust in Media](#), Sources of Federal Election News. [Newspapers (electronic + print) and online news sites], July 2025.

continuously improving [our journalistic standards](#). Our newsrooms welcome comments, corrections, and complaints. The *Star* employs a Public Editor who independently investigates complaints. All our newsrooms are members of the National Newsmedia Council, which can take further action if a complainant is not satisfied.

Federal public supports for news media align with efforts to protect editorial independence and maintain public trust. An independent advisory committee made up of journalists and editors representing a diverse range of media organizations administers eligibility for the QCJO designation. [They consider factors including](#) adherence to journalistic processes and principles. To receive funding from the [Local Journalism Initiative](#) or from the [Online News Act](#), media outlets must adhere to a publicly available code of ethics that includes fairness, independence and rigour in reporting.

However, at present it is too difficult for a member of the public to understand let alone scrutinize these measures. Canadians are vigorously debating the role of government and the design of policies and programs that support Canadian journalism. Such debates generate significant heat, but little light: information about existing policies, programs, and their administration is complex, fragmented, and opaque. This information must be more legible and transparent, to minimize misunderstanding and confusion, and support the rigorous public evaluation needed to foster continuous improvement and public trust. For example:

- CRA does not publish a list of QCJOs, making it impossible for Canadians to know which organizations are eligible to access supports, and which are not
- CRA's webpages describing tax measures to support Canadian journalism, including the journalism labour tax credit, contain complex and out-of-date information
- Canadian Heritage does not describe the eligibility requirements for outlets seeking to access the Local Journalism Initiative, which is only described in detailed program guidelines buried on the administrators' websites
- Data about the news industry, federal measures, and about Canadians' news habits, including news consumption and payment for news is fragmented, out-of-date, or not at all available from official or high-quality sources

**Recommendation 5:** To help Canadians understand and debate the appropriate role for government and design of policies supporting Canadian journalism, the Government should review how it provides information and data about federal supports and the news sector.

- This review should increase transparency, clarity, and completeness so that Canadians can understand (i) the disruptions and market failures caused in the Canadian news sector due to foreign tech monopolies (the problem), (ii) how the federal government has intervened (the solutions), and (iii) the state of the news media in historic context and in the context of federal interventions (the outcomes).

## Appendix: Testimony to the Committee

**Date:** 23 April 2026  
**To:** House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage  
**From:** Angus Frame, President of Torstar Corporation

My name is Angus Frame. I am the President of Torstar. I spent twelve years as a journalist before moving into digital product leadership. I've spent my career at the intersection of journalism and technology—building the platforms that deliver the news Canadians rely on.

I'm here today to represent Torstar's more than 300 Ontario-based journalists. From the *Toronto Star* and the *Hamilton Spectator* to our suite of hyper-local community brands including *The Smiths Falls Record*, *The New Hamburg Independent* and many more - - our reporters are often the only ones in the room at city hall or the local courthouse. Without them, many Ontario communities would simply have no local reporting at all.

The stories we tell – whether reporter Brendan Kenedy's revelations about prisoner abuse at the Maplehurst Correctional Institute or the investigations into online harms in our podcast *Left to their Own Devices* (recently nominated for a Peabody Award) – would not be possible without the dedication of talented journalists or the resources required to support their work.

Over 11 million Canadians come to our network of sites, apps, and feeds every month. We are deepening our relationships with them and diversifying our business through new digital products, partnerships, and events.

And we are investing in the next generation. This year, we are hiring 40 new or student journalists. The stability provided by federal programs has given us the predictability needed to make these hires, expand our footprint and invest in local news and high-quality journalism.

However, our resilience is challenged by an increasingly abusive environment. Canadian journalism faces multiple market failures, caused by Big Tech monopolies.

U.S. Courts found that Google maintains a monopoly over the ad tech stack. They act as the buyer, the seller, and the exchange, taking a massive cut of every advertising dollar. The Court also found that Google had engaged in several unlawful schemes, including manipulating its ad-exchange auction and rigging bids so that its own customers would win. This has deprived publishers of billions in ad revenue worldwide.

Foreign giants essentially control the entire tech stack; they have inserted themselves as unavoidable gatekeepers, controlling who can compete in digital markets, and who can be seen and heard.

Google has controlled traffic for years and has wielded the power to make or break publishers with changes to their core algorithm, which remains veiled in secrecy. More recently, Google's "AI Overviews" summarize content and present it to users in a way that discourages a click-through. Publishers don't get traffic, attribution or revenue from this practice that effectively steals our content under the guise of "innovation."

We are fighting the theft of our content. But we cannot do it alone. We need a regulatory environment that recognizes that journalism is not just another "content type" – it is fundamental infrastructure for a functioning democracy.

When Big Tech undermines the business model of local news, they replace it with "AI slop" and a fractured ecosystem where mis and dis-information thrive. This makes it increasingly difficult for Canadians to operate from a place of shared knowledge.

We see the Ontario government taking a positive step with their "Ad Set Aside" program, prioritizing local media. Ottawa must follow suit. The federal government is weakening our information sovereignty by turning away from Canadian media and platforms while funneling multi-millions of tax dollars into the coffers of foreign tech monopolists.

I will leave you with a challenging scenario.

Imagine that tomorrow the government faces an emergency and needs to communicate urgently with Canadians, but the only way to do so is through channels owned and controlled by Silicon Valley billionaires and the Trump administration. This is no mere hypothetical – these actors can exercise control over Canadian institutions, our press, and our civic life.

I ask each of you to remain vigilant about Big Tech's power over Canadian policymaking. Many so-called "Canadian" associations are dominated by U.S. Big Tech.

As Canadians' elected representatives, I urge you to guard against false narratives about Canada's best interests.

You can do this by asking: Does a proposal counter Big Tech's power over Canada, or does it ignore or even accept that power? If the latter, you are not hearing a solution, you are being urged to surrender.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.