



News Media Canada
Médias d'Info Canada

SUBMISSION

to the

HOUSE OF COMMONS
STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Pre-Budget Consultations
in Advance of the 2026 Budget

by

News Media Canada

April 8, 2026

Recommendations

1. *To maintain and grow newsroom jobs:* Keep the Canadian Journalism Labour Tax Credit at the current 35% level (it is scheduled to revert to 25% on January 1, 2027). This support has high efficacy in that it rewards those who maintain and grow newsroom employment. The current Qualified Canadian Journalism Organization eligibility criteria require a minimum of two arm's length newsroom employees. The eligibility criteria should be amended to include journalists who own or are a partner in the news business, who do not deal at arm's length with the business.
2. *To follow through on the Government's 'Buy Canadian' pledge and to keep advertising dollars in Canada:* A.) Earmark 25 per cent of the Government's advertising spend toward private sector Canadian news sources. Despite the Government's stated "Buy Canadian" policy, of the \$64.2 million that flowed through the Agency of Record for 2024 to 2025, only \$222,000 went to all print publications in the country combined. For advertisers – whether governments or the private sector – credible journalism strengthens trust while delivering real business results in a brand safe environment. We can help the Government reach the 86 per cent of Canadians who engage with newspaper content each week. Since 2024, [Ontario has directed its agencies, boards, and commissions to direct 25% of advertising spend to news publishers](#). B.) Follow Recommendation #213 from the [Committee's February 2024 report](#) and bring fairness to the [different tax treatment of advertising](#).
3. *To support the creation of original civic journalism that covers the diverse needs of underserved communities across Canada:* Extend the Local Journalism Initiative beyond March 31, 2027. In 2023–2024, the program contributed to the hiring of approximately 700 journalists across Canada.
4. *To help stop the theft of news publishers' intellectual property by artificial intelligence companies:* A.) Public Services and Procurement Canada and Treasury Board should work together to ensure those on the government's [list of interested artificial intelligence suppliers](#) sign a supplier commitment that includes a commitment to the principles of transparency, consent, and attribution with respect to all copyright-protected source content. B.) The Minister of Industry should ask the Competition Bureau to conduct a study into the state of competition with respect to search and AI, with a view to separating Google's crawler into separate crawlers – one for AI and one for search. C.) The Copyright Act should not be amended to include a text and data mining exception. Rights holders must be protected – no exceptions.

On behalf of our member publishers, we are pleased to participate in the Pre-Budget Consultations in advance of the 2026 Budget.

Real news is the antidote to the disinformation/misinformation crisis, which is being fueled by AI and social media. But real news – created by real journalists who adhere to codes of ethics – is expensive to create. Fact-gathering, fact-checking, editorial and legal review, and being accountable cost real money.

The advertising market remains challenging. Too many ad dollars are being scooped up by Google and other American hyperscalers. Last year, a U.S. federal district court judge ruled that Google – which operates in all three areas of the market: the buying, the selling, and the ad exchange itself – illegally monopolized the ad technology market through anti-competitive conduct. And AI companies are stealing our copyright-protected content.

On the positive side, the Online News Act, while imperfect, is working for Canadian news publishers. Prior to the Act – and in an effort to thwart it – Google and Meta entered into content licensing deals with some news publishers. Most of our 550-member news titles never saw a dime in content licensing from American Big Tech firms. Today, publishers – small and large – are getting about \$17,000 per fulltime journalist under the Online News Act.

Between the Online News Act and the 35% refundable Canadian Journalism Labour Tax Credit – which rewards those who maintain and grow journalism jobs – there is finally a level of predictability for business planning, which is translating into stability in many newsrooms, where we are finally seeing investment after years of cost-cutting.

Canadians need access to timely and relevant local fact-based, fact-checked journalism, produced by professional journalists to stay informed about issues that directly impact their lives and to make informed decisions. The recommendations outlined above are steps the Government can take to maintain independent Canadian local and national news.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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