

Local News and Democracy

LWV position (adopted 2023)

It is the responsibility of the government to provide support for conditions under which credible local journalism can survive and thrive.



**The
Decline of
Local News
and Its
Impact on
Democracy**



Brier Dudley

The Seattle Times

Editor, Free Press
Initiative

The bill

SSB 5102

Key sponsor: Sen. Lisa Wellman

SSB 5626

Key sponsor: Sen. Marko Liias

What the bill would do

SSB 5102

Requires each district to have a policy that every student has access to school library information and technology programs (via a trained teacher/librarian)

Requires school boards to provide resources to operate such programs

SSB 5626

Requires an OSPI a program to expand media literacy and digital citizenship in *subject areas*

Support a cadre of teachers to train other teachers to teach media literacy

What else the bill would do

SSB 5102

Allows smaller districts to employ noncertificated staff if all reasonable efforts to hire certificated staff are unsuccessful

SSB 5626

Requires OSPI to create a grant program for curriculum development in media literacy and digital citizenship in *subject areas*

Status of the bill

SSB 5102

Passed in the Senate, 28-20-0-1

Hung up in House Appropriations

Back to the Senate in January

SSB 5626

Passed in the Senate, 44-4-0-1

Hung up in House Appropriations

Back to the Senate in January

Comments about the bill

ESSB 5102

Sponsor's LA: "Perhaps the Appropriations Committee just ran out of time. Not aware of any 'problems' with the bill."

SW Washington lawmaker called it a good bill, but full funding of libraries should be the priority.

ESSB 5626

SW Washington lawmaker: "Kids have so much access to social media. They need the skills to be able to decipher what is trustworthy and what isn't."

Key supporters:

SSB 5102



SSB 5626



Local News and Democracy position:

LN-4: The League of Women Voters of Washington also believes media literacy and news education, including support for journalism students, is essential. These opportunities should be expanded in schools and throughout communities.



Joanne Lisosky, Ph.D.

Professor emerita, PLU

Journalist, author of "War
on Words: Who should
Protect Journalists?"