

We need your help to reach out to Rep. Jordan, Rep. Rick Hansen, Sen. Hawj (Pronounced Her) and any other legislator you know or who is in your newspaper's coverage area. Please let us know if you receive any feedback.

We are asking publishers who would likely be subject to the House bill's requirements to reach out to key legislators to tell them your newspaper will be negatively impacted and ask them to support the Senate bill. It is okay to leave a message. Also, contact the legislator's legislative assistant.

Here are details:

A proposal to create a statewide recycling program financed by paper and packaging producers is included in the House & Senate Environment Omnibus bills (HF 3911/ SF 3887).

MNA secured an exemption in the Senate version for ALL news publications from the requirements, but the House version only exempts publications with circulations lower than 20,000.

MNA is advocating for the Senate bill, so all Minnesota newspapers are exempted.

Legislators to contact:

Rep. Sydney Jordan – author of the House

proposal <https://www.house.mn.gov/members/profile/15535>

Rep. Rick Hansen – Chair of the House Environment

Committee <https://www.house.mn.gov/members/profile/12282>

Request/ask to Rep. Jordan and Rep. Hansen

Please adopt Senate language in Environment conference committee and keep all newspapers out of the bill. Share your own story. Additional talking points are below

Senator Hawj-Chair of the Seante Environment

committee[https://www.senate.mn/members/member bio.html?mem_id=1213](https://www.senate.mn/members/member_bio.html?mem_id=1213)

Request/ask for Sen. Hawj

Thank you for including a full exemption in your bill. Please adopt the Senate language in Environment conference committee and keep all newspapers out of the bill.

Also, contact any other legislators (Senate and House) that represent the community/communities served by your newspaper or that you have a good relationship with. Senate Members <https://www.senate.mn/members?id=alphabetical> – Message: Your newspaper needs your help. Please tell your Environment Chair Sen. Hawj (pronounced Her) that you support the Senate newspaper exemption language in the Environment Omnibus bill and ask them to adopt Senate language.

House Members: <https://www.house.mn.gov/members/list> - Message: Your newspaper needs your help. Please tell your Environment Chair Rep. Rick Hansen that you support the Senate newspaper exemption language in the Environment Omnibus bill and ask them to adopt Senate language.

Additional Messaging/Information:

Your own story and thoughts are most important to share, but we want to provide you with talking points on the bill and recycling in case they are helpful.

- The focus of the proposal is packaging waste. Newspapers are not packaging and the amount of physical newspapers are not growing with the digital economy, as is the case for consumer packaging targeted by the bill.
- The function performed by newspapers is very different from that of most other products in the waste stream. Newspapers provide vital news and information to residents of the state, frequently addressing environmental issues.
 - Given the current degree of disruption in the newspaper business and the stress on newspaper budgets, the kinds of additional expenses imposed by House bill would literally deprive residents of news and information
- The 20,000-circulation threshold would impact many more newspapers than just the state's largest subscription newspapers – it would impact our paper.
 - Imposing the obligations and expense of compliance with this new program would have a severely negative impact on us, even though newspaper is not a principal contributor to the waste problem in Minnesota.
- All states but one that have enacted producer responsibility related laws have exempted newspapers, MN should do the same.
- Calculating circulation is not as simple as it seems
 - A newspaper's circulation varies, for a variety of reasons – daily papers often have more Sunday/weekend subscribers than other days; subscriptions in our tourism-heavy lake communities can vary greatly by season; subscribers to all publications sign up and cancel every day and move between physical and digital subscriptions.
 - A newspaper may have a circulation above the threshold in one month but below it the next.
 - E-edition subscriptions are almost always included in a newspaper's circulation figures and may substantially increase the overall number, but E-editions have no bearing on production of paper (other than to reduce it), so even some newspapers that do not produce paper copies over the circulation threshold could be subject to the bill's requirements.

- Having this kind of limitation could also disincentivize a newspaper to grow to avoid crossing the threshold.
- All of this means it would be difficult for many newspapers to know if they are subject to the bill or not in any given month or year.
- It is unclear who or what will determine a newspaper's circulation for the purposes of the exemption, or if a newspaper would be required to actively claim the exemption by submitting information to an entity for verification.
 - Would there be a process for a newspaper to follow?

Newspaper Recycling Data:

- Newspapers are recycled at a rate of more than 64 percent, higher than any other product, and magazines have a similar success rate while recycling 100 percent of leftover retail product.
- Newspapers and magazines are environmentally friendly –
 - Newspapers use soy-based non-toxic inks, so newsprint is fully compostable and biodegrades in a matter of months.
 - Magazines use linseed oil-based non-toxic inks and soluble adhesives that do not contaminate or disrupt the recycling process and are similarly 100 percent biodegradable within months.
- Both newspapers and magazines can be recycled multiple times before the fibers become too short and weak to be reused.
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency, newspapers comprise only 1.7 percent of municipal solid waste and magazines comprise 0.3 percent.
- Newspapers and magazines encourage their readers to recycle and help inform and education the public about waste issues through their news stories.
- Including news publications in the bill would yield minimal environmental benefits at a very high cost of compliance for Minnesota's newspapers.

If you have questions let me know. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

Lisa Hills
 Executive Director
 Minnesota Newspaper Association
 Minnesota News Media Institute
Lisa@mna.org
 612-278-0222

"Every Month, Almost 3.9 Million Active Consumers – or 86% of Minnesota Adults – Read Local Print or Digital Newspapers!"

(Source: Minnesota Market Study, 2021; Coda Ventures)