

# 'NEWS MEDIA IS ESSENTIAL'

## REGION URGES FEDS TO TAKE ACTION IN SUPPORT OF CANADIAN JOURNALISM

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Halton is calling on the federal government to quickly pass legislation

that will ensure a healthy future for the news media industry.

A motion to that effect, put forth by Oakville Mayor Burton and Oakville Councillor Cathy Duddeck, was passed by regional council during its most recent meeting.

The resolution recognizes that "a healthy, professional news media is essential to the proper functioning of democracy in the region" and endorses legis-

lation and regulations that support and rejuvenate news outlets across the country.

It goes on to outline concerns with the layoff of nearly 500 Canadian journalists between March 2020 and April 2021, and the prior loss of 250 established news outlets across the country due to closures or mergers over a decade-long period starting in 2008.

Duddeck said that sup-

port for journalists is needed "as quite often they are the ones who get the information out to everybody on our behalf.

Seeing that large decrease, we wanted to make sure that we support them in the interim."

Burlington Mayor Marianne Meed Ward, who spent 22 years in the journalism industry, voiced her support for the motion and "the need for a good, strong local media."

She went on to speak about a meeting recently held by Torstar/Metroland that brought together Halton community leaders to

provide constructive feedback on media coverage in the region and more.

"As we call for local media support and clearly say that we need the press, we also need the press to be on their game," she said. "I'm optimistic that our words were heard, and that we go forward in a spirit of camaraderie."

Burlington Councillor Paul Sharman said while he wholeheartedly endorses the resolution, he's not sure that "we can stop the tide of change" when it comes to the challenges traditional media outlets face in the rise of digital

platforms and advertising.

The federal government is currently crafting a plan that would see Internet giants Google and Facebook pay for Canadian news content on their platforms.

Previously, the feds made a 2019 budget allocation of nearly \$600 million in aid for Canadian media over a five-year period, including a 25 per cent tax credit for newsroom salaries, a 15 per cent tax credit for digital media subscribers and charitable tax status for non-profit news outlets.

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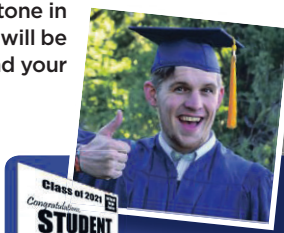
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