



Proclamation
World Press Freedom Day
May 3rd, 2021

Whereas, A healthy, professional news media is essential for the proper functioning of civil society and democracy at the local, regional, federal and international levels. The Public Policy Forum declares — on its website for the 2017 report *The Shattered Mirror: News, Democracy and Trust in the Digital Age* (commissioned by the federal government) — that “real news is in crisis” in this country;

Whereas, Canadians have lost the essential services provided by roughly 3,000 media workers across Canada due to temporary and permanent layoffs from the time the COVID-19 pandemic began — a time it became clearer to the public how important it is for Canadians to receive accurate information — and advertising revenues have plunged, prompting an emergency \$30-million advertising-buy by the federal government;

Whereas, Residents of 190 Canadian communities lost 250 established news outlets due to closings or mergers between 2008 and 2018. Two thirds of Canadians agree or somewhat agree that because of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak the federal government should treat widespread media bankruptcies and layoffs as an emergency, according to a Nanos Research poll of April 2020;

Whereas, The federal government allocated nearly \$600 million in aid for Canadian media over five years in its 2019 budget, 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;

Whereas, Canada’s federal government acknowledged in its 2019 budget (p. 173) that “A strong and independent news media is crucial to a well-functioning democracy”. At least 17 municipal councils in Ontario and B.C. have already passed resolutions similar to the one proposed below. The news media in the Halifax area have been instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring local citizens have accurate local information;

Therefore, be it resolved that I, Mayor Mike Savage, on behalf of Halifax Regional Council, do hereby proclaim May 3rd, 2021 as “World Press Freedom Day” in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Dated at Halifax, Nova Scotia
this 3rd day of May 2021




Mike Savage
Mayor