

which in turn leads to psychological distress, cognitive impairment, and the proliferation of infectious respiratory diseases, allergens, and other respiratory issues;

Whereas incarcerated people are commonly confined to spaces where they are exposed to mold, asbestos, and pests;

Whereas the diets of incarcerated people are regularly below standards requisite for good health;

Whereas food safety standards and preparation guidelines are not uniformly enforced and followed in carceral facilities;

Whereas the constant noise and artificial light that is common in prison environments can act as a form of torture that induces progressively severe mental stress and anxiety;

Whereas incarcerated people with little or no access to natural light are more likely to be depressed and engage in harmful behavior that can extend the duration of their incarceration;

Whereas conditions of incarceration should be conducive to rehabilitation;

Whereas the cumulative and chronic health impacts of incarceration can transform short sentences into long-term or life-long punishment; and

Whereas many incarcerated people endure conditions that are cruel, inhumane, unsafe, and not conducive to rehabilitative justice: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) declares that incarcerated people have the right to healthy and safe environments, and the right to advocate for protecting and improving their environmental health; and

(2) proclaims this Declaration of Environmental Rights for Incarcerated People, founded on the principles that—

(A) incarcerated people have inherent dignity and personhood;

(B) the right to humane treatment is inviolable and without distinction of any kind, including the nature of a crime committed;

(C) incarcerated people have the right to a healthy environment;

(D) environmental standards in carceral facilities should protect the health of the most vulnerable people with an adequate margin of safety;

(E) disregard and contempt for the environmental health of incarcerated people undermines the pursuit of justice;

(F) the right of incarcerated people to a healthy environment should be universally recognized and protected by law;

(G) legal remedies for inhumane conditions should be universally available to incarcerated people and their advocates, without hindrance or delay, in courts of law;

(H) incarcerated people have the right to, and should be proactively supplied with, information and education regarding exposure pathways to environmental hazards in the facilities in which they are incarcerated;

(I) incarcerated people have the right to discuss the environmental health conditions of carceral facilities among themselves;

(J) incarcerated people have the right to advocate, without fear or threat of retaliation, to protect and improve their environmental health;

(K) incarcerated people have the right to refuse to work or labor in unsafe or hazardous conditions, and have the right to receive alternative work opportunities, without threat of retaliation or impact on release decisions; and

(L) decarceration should serve as a principal strategy to reduce the environmental health harms of criminal legal systems; and

(3) supports efforts to enact legislation guided by the principles described in paragraph (2).

SENATE RESOLUTION 649—RAISING AWARENESS OF LAKE STURGEON (ACIPENSER FULVESCENS)

Mr. WELCH submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 649

Whereas lake sturgeon are one of the largest North American freshwater fish and can live for 150 years or longer;

Whereas lake sturgeon are considered living fossils, as their lineage dates back to the time of dinosaurs, making them one of the oldest fish species still in existence;

Whereas lake sturgeon are slow to reproduce as they may not spawn until they are 15 to 25 years old and they only spawn every 4 years on average;

Whereas lake sturgeon are found across the Great Lakes, northeastern United States, and southeastern Canada;

Whereas lake sturgeon are bottom-dwelling fish that require extensive areas of shallow water to feed on a wide variety of organisms;

Whereas historical overfishing, invasive species, and habitat degradation have caused declines in the population of local lake sturgeon;

Whereas many States list lake sturgeon as an endangered, threatened, or otherwise protected species;

Whereas lake sturgeon serve an important role as an indicator of ecosystem health;

Whereas lake sturgeon attract the attention of the public because of their large size and prehistoric body;

Whereas many Federal agencies, States, Tribes, and local communities are collaborating on lake sturgeon management programs that are reestablishing healthy lake sturgeon populations; and

Whereas lake sturgeon have cultural importance for many indigenous communities, representing a traditional food source: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate encourages—

(1) continued collaboration among Federal, State, Tribal, and other partners to manage and increase lake sturgeon populations across their extensive range;

(2) continued efforts to identify, protect, and restore the habitat of lake sturgeon;

(3) continued efforts to prevent and control invasive species and restore the reproductive habitat of lake sturgeon;

(4) increased public awareness of lake sturgeon; and

(5) education of anglers and local communities on the proper ways to handle lake sturgeon if accidentally caught.

SENATE RESOLUTION 650—RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED STATES NAVAL CONSTRUCTION FORCE, KNOWN AS THE “SEABEES”, AND THE TREMENDOUS SACRIFICES AND CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE SEABEES WHO HAVE FOUGHT AND SERVED ON BEHALF OF OUR COUNTRY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. REED, and Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 650

Whereas, on January 5, 1942, the first United States Naval Construction units were authorized by the Department of the Navy;

Whereas, on March 5, 1942, the United States Naval Construction Force (referred to in this preamble as “Seabees”) was granted official permission by the Navy to use the name “Seabees”;

Whereas, in 1942, Frank J. Iafrate, a native of North Providence, Rhode Island, who later joined the Seabees as a Chief Carpenter’s Mate, designed the “Fighting Bee” logo that is still used by the Seabees in 2024;

Whereas, for more than 80 years, the Seabees have built bases, airfields, roads, bridges, fueling stations, and other infrastructure, both on land and underwater, in support of the Navy and Marine Corps;

Whereas the motto of the Seabees, “Construimus, Batuimus”, Latin for “We Build, We Fight”, reflects the indispensable dual role of the Seabees in building critical warfighting infrastructure and defending the United States in combat;

Whereas the ingenuity, improvisation, and entrepreneurial spirit of the Seabees has given the Armed Forces a strategic advantage and contributed to countless successes on the battlefield for the United States since World War II;

Whereas the Seabees have served as goodwill ambassadors across the globe, performing humanitarian and civic action projects to—

(1) improve access to sanitation, drinking water, and utilities;

(2) build schools, hospitals, and roads; and

(3) provide emergency relief in the aftermath of major disasters;

Whereas, with courage, creativity, and a “can-do” attitude, the Seabees have helped to build both critical infrastructure and valued friendships around the world; and

Whereas March 5, 2024, is the 82nd anniversary of the establishment of the Seabees: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges and expresses thanks for the thousands of members of the United States Naval Construction Force (referred to in this resolution as “Seabees”) who, through ingenuity, strength, courage, and perseverance, have protected the United States and improved the lives of countless people in the United States and around the world;

(2) honors the courage and sacrifices of those members of the Seabees who have perished in defense of the United States;

(3) expresses unending gratitude for the many sacrifices made by the families of members of the Seabees; and

(4) proudly recognizes the 82nd anniversary of the establishment of the Seabees.

SENATE RESOLUTION 651—DESIGNATING APRIL 2024 AS “PRESERVING AND PROTECTING LOCAL NEWS MONTH” AND RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL NEWS

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. WELCH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KING, and Ms. BUTLER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 651

Whereas the United States was founded on the principle of freedom of the press enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which declares that “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . .”;

Whereas an informed citizenry depends on accurate and unbiased news reporting to inform the judgment of the people;

Whereas a robust, diverse, and sustainable local news presence leads to civic engagement and the buttressing of democratic norms and practices;

Whereas local news provides vital information on local, State, and national elections to help United States citizens execute their civic responsibility;

Whereas the absence of local news outlets and investigative reporting allows local government corruption and corporate malfeasance to go unchecked;

Whereas local journalists help combat misinformation and disinformation by using their community knowledge and connections to debunk fraudulent or misleading content;

Whereas local cable franchises routinely provide for public educational and government access channels on their systems, and those channels—

- (1) offer vital local civic programming that informs communities;
- (2) provide news and information not often available on other local broadcast channels or cable;
- (3) supplement local journalism; and
- (4) at times, are the only source for local news;

Whereas more than ¾ of the United States citizenry trust local news sources;

Whereas, according to recent research—
 (1) the United States has lost nearly 2,900 local print outlets since 2005, which accounts for over ¼ of all local print outlets, and is on track to lose ½ of all local print outlets by 2025;

(2) an average of 2.5 local print outlets are being shuttered every week in the United States;

(3) more than 200 of the 3,143 counties and county equivalents in the United States have no local newspaper at all, creating a news shortage for the roughly 4,000,000 residents of those areas;

(4) of the remaining counties in the United States, more than ½ have only 1 newspaper to cover populations ranging from fewer than 1,000 to more than 1,000,000 residents and ⅔ have no daily newspaper, with fewer than 100 of these counties having a digital substitute;

(5) more than ½ of all newspapers in the United States have changed owners during the past decade, and, in 2020, the 25 largest newspaper ownership companies owned ⅓ of all daily newspapers, including 70 percent of newspapers that still circulate daily;

(6) of the surviving 6,700 newspapers in the United States, thousands now qualify as “ghost newspapers”, or newspapers with reporting and photography staffs that are so significantly reduced that they can no longer provide much of the breaking news or public service journalism that once informed readers about vital issues in their communities;

(7) rural counties are among the counties most deeply impacted by the loss of local reporting, as more than 500 of the nearly 2,900 newspapers that have closed since 2005 are in rural counties; and

(8) researchers at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism estimate that 228 counties in the United States are at an elevated risk of becoming news deserts in the next 5 years, which would inordinately impact high-poverty areas in the South and Midwest and communities with significant Black, Latino, and Native American populations;

Whereas, while overall employment in newspaper, television, radio, and digital newsrooms dropped by roughly 26 percent, or 30,000 jobs, between 2008 and 2020, the plunge in newspaper newsrooms alone was much worse at 57 percent, or 40,000 jobs, during that same time period;

Whereas the number of news employees in the radio broadcasting industry dropped by 26 percent between 2008 and 2020;

Whereas more than 21,400 media jobs were lost in 2023, the highest number, excluding 2020, since the height of the Great Recession in 2009;

Whereas digital native publications have laid off hundreds of journalists, including over 500 in January 2024 alone, and many of those publications have shuttered during the last year;

Whereas beat reporting, meaning the day-to-day coverage of a particular field that allows a journalist to develop expertise and cultivate sources, has ceased to be a viable career for would-be journalists due to the decimation of newsroom budgets;

Whereas requests submitted under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as “Freedom of Information Act requests”), by local newspapers to local, State, and Federal agencies fell by nearly 50 percent between 2005 and 2010, demonstrating a significant drop in the extent to which local reporters request government records;

Whereas newspapers alone lost more than \$39,800,000,000 in advertising revenue between 2005 and 2020;

Whereas the sponsorship revenue of all-news radio stations dropped by 25 percent between 2019 and 2021;

Whereas there remains a significant gender disparity in newsroom employment, with women comprising approximately ⅓ of staff who are 30 years of age or older;

Whereas women who are local television news anchors and reporters, especially women of color, are often subject to harassment and stalking;

Whereas, across the United States, there are nearly 300 media outlets that primarily serve Black communities, and, in recent years, many of those newspapers have seen—

- (1) significant losses in advertising revenue as small businesses in their communities were forced to close; and
- (2) declines in circulation due to the closures of businesses in their communities;

Whereas the number of Black journalists working at daily newspapers dropped by 40 percent between 1997 and 2014, more than for any other demographic group, and the exodus of journalists from local news outlets exacerbated amid the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic has been disproportionately borne by Black constituencies;

Whereas the number of print media sources published by and for Native American readers has shrunk dramatically in recent years, from 700 media outlets in 1998 to only 200 in 2018;

Whereas Tribally owned news outlets are often dependent on Tribal governments for funding, but most of those outlets lack the policy structure necessary to fully protect journalistic independence;

Whereas a 2018 survey by the Native American Journalists Association found that 83 percent of respondents believed that Native press coverage of Tribal government affairs was sometimes, frequently, or always censored;

Whereas there are more than 620 Latino news media outlets in the United States, including more than 275 independently owned print publications, and collectively these news media outlets primarily rely on a declining advertising revenue base;

Whereas the lack of local news impacts communities that speak languages other than English, which are often excluded from national media coverage;

Whereas investments in local journalism have mainly focused on larger media markets, contributing to inequities and a journalistic divide between affluent and low-income communities;

Whereas student journalists, at both the college and high school level, have stepped in to play an important role reporting on their local communities despite the lack of educational resources and support;

Whereas the Pew Research Center reports that nearly 1 in 10 statehouse reporters are student journalists;

Whereas more than 360 local newsrooms have closed from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 to the present day;

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic took a substantial economic toll on the local news industry, contributing to budget cuts, staff layoffs, and scores of newsroom closures, from which the industry has yet to fully recover, as epitomized by mass layoffs and closures at several local news outlets in the 50 States and the District of Columbia in 2023 and early 2024;

Whereas PEN America proposed “a major reimagining of the local news space” in its 2019 call-to-action report, “Losing the News: The Decimation of Local Journalism and the Search for Solutions”, and called on society and the Federal Government to urgently address the alarming demise of local journalism; and

Whereas, half a century ago, Congress perceived that the commercial television industry would not independently provide the educational and public interest broadcasting that was appropriate and necessary for the country, and, informed by an independent report prepared by the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which has since ensured that radio and television include public interest educational and reporting programs using annually appropriated funds; Now, therefore, be it

- Resolved*, That the Senate—
 - (1) designates April 2024 as “Preserving and Protecting Local News Month”;
 - (2) affirms that local news serves an essential function in the democracy of the United States;
 - (3) recognizes local news as a public good; and
 - (4) acknowledges the valuable contributions of local journalism towards the maintenance of healthy and vibrant communities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 652—DESIGNATING APRIL 2024 AS “SECOND CHANCE MONTH”

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CRAMER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 652

Whereas every individual is endowed with human dignity and value;

Whereas redemption and second chances are values of the United States;

Whereas millions of citizens of the United States have a criminal record;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of individuals return to their communities from Federal and State prisons every year;

Whereas many individuals returning from Federal and State prisons have paid their debt for committing crimes but still face significant legal and societal barriers (referred to in this preamble as “collateral consequences”);

Whereas collateral consequences for an individual returning from a Federal or State prison are often mandatory and take effect automatically, regardless of—

- (1) whether there is a nexus between the crime and public safety;
- (2) the seriousness of the crime;
- (3) the time that has passed since the individual committed the crime; or