

Digital News Publishers Launch Pennsylvania Independent News Association (PiNA) to Advocate for Local News Organizations

New Coalition Targets Public Notice Reform and Sustainable Models for Independent Newsrooms Across the Commonwealth

The publishers of two dozen local news brands across Pennsylvania today announced the official formation of the Pennsylvania Independent News Association (PiNA).

The new Harrisburg-based organization is dedicated to bringing together digital-first local news organizations to strengthen the independent press, modernize laws and policies, and ensure the long-term sustainability of community news.

“The news industry is in a period of profound transformation, and digital news publishers need a seat at the table,” said Tom Sofield, PiNA’s president and publisher of LevittownNow.com.

PiNA’s mission is to provide these publishers with a collective voice, advocating for policies that reflect the modern reality of news consumers, local businesses, and civic organizations.

An immediate focus for the new association is the reform of Pennsylvania’s outdated public notice laws, which currently prohibit digital outlets from publishing legal notices. PiNA seeks the right for qualified and established digital outlets to compete against incumbent print outlets and for local municipalities to choose the publication and medium that’s best for their communities. PiNA’s proposed amendment draws from similar legislation in Virginia that was signed into law in 2024.

“PiNA publishers have long been ready to compromise and find policy solutions that work for all Pennsylvanians,” said PiNA secretary and treasurer Davis Shaver, publisher of LebTown. “When lawmakers and local government organizations say they want the ability to self-publish notices, it’s a result of legacy newspapers treating the print monopoly over public notices as a profit center.”

PiNA’s position is that independent outlets can provide the third-party affidavits of publication required to demonstrate compliance with public notice mandates – an essential role of the notice process that would not be possible if agencies were allowed to publish on their own websites.

“We understand why self-publication is desirable, but it’s not the only way to provide urgently needed financial relief for the onerous print newspaper tax on public notices,” said Shaver. “We’re tired of waiting for legacy newspapers to disrupt themselves – enough is enough, let’s move on.”

PiNA has already engaged with state legislators from across the Commonwealth. PiNA leadership said that the group has been encouraged to learn that its position has widespread support. In particular, PiNA commends Representative Robert Freeman for his leadership on this issue.

PiNA represents a group of serious-minded news organizations and leaders. Its membership spans the Commonwealth, from the most rural area to the suburbs and to the neighborhoods of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. PiNA member outlets are read by millions of Pennsylvanians monthly.

“We are coming together to advocate for our staffs, our readers, and common-sense policies — like public notice reform — that support a free and modern press,” said Sofield. “By combining our strengths, we can ensure that every community in Pennsylvania has access to reliable local news.”

The association will work to bring collaboration among the locally-owned Pennsylvania small businesses to share ideas and solutions for growth, technology, and sustainable revenue models.

“We believe in the power of local news to build stronger communities and improve lives,” said Sofield. “By forming PiNA, we’re creating a base for independent publishers to thrive together.”

PiNA is focused on ensuring that high-quality, trustworthy local news is a permanent fixture in Pennsylvania’s 67 counties. The founding members of PiNA include Burb Media, EYT Media Group, Fideri News Network, Lazerpro, Lebanon Publishing Company, NCPA Media LLC, and Street Light Media Group. The first associate members include West Hills Gazette and Saucon Source.

Member Outlets: AroundAmbler.com, CentralBucksNews.com, explore814.com, exploreClarion.com, exploreJeffersonPA.com, exploreVenango.com, GlensideLocal.com, HorshamNow.com, LebTown.com, LevittownNow.com, MediaPANow.com, MoreThanTheCurve.com, NewHopeFreePress.com, NewtownPANow.com, NorthCentralPA.com, NorthPennNow.com, PerkValleyNow.com, PhillyDaily.com, SauconSource.com, StateCollege.com, WestHillsGazette.com, WillowGroveNow.com, and WissNow.com.

About PiNA

The Pennsylvania Independent News Association (PiNA) is a trade association representing digital-first local news publishers. PiNA works to promote the health and sustainability of independent news outlets through advocacy, collaboration, and innovation.

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