

KENTUCKY PRESS ASSOCIATION  
101 Consumer Lane  
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KPA Statement on anti-SLAPP legislation.

The Kentucky Press Association has represented Kentucky's newspapers for 152 years. It is the 10th oldest state press association in the country and represents all 170 newspapers published in Kentucky.

Our members work with stakeholders to maintain transparency in state and local government in Kentucky, through protecting Kentucky's Open Records and Open Meetings laws and by ensuring every Kentuckian has the unfettered ability to exercise their First Amendment rights to free speech.

The KPA supports passage of anti-SLAPP legislation and we applaud Representatives Kulkarni and Nemes for bringing it before the Kentucky General Assembly. Our members have a tradition of pushing back against government overreach, of investigating corruption and abuses of power.

The Kentucky Press Association believes deeply in the Freedom of Speech enshrined in the United States Constitution. But when the powerful use baseless lawsuits to punish those who criticize them, that speech is no longer free.

SLAPP lawsuits, when used by big government or billionaire developers, are meant to exhaust an individual's financial and emotional wherewithal. The intention of the lawsuit is not to seek justice through the courts – it's meant to drain the target's bank account, to exhaust a person's will to fight, so that the cost of their speech is so high that they cannot afford it anymore.

SLAPP lawsuits are the worst kind of private censorship, where the powerful use their resources to crush the voice of dissent.

The Kentucky Press Association encourages members of the Kentucky General Assembly to pass anti-SLAPP legislation to ensure Kentuckians across the Commonwealth can speak their minds without fear of retaliation.

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