



RESOLUTIONS FOR 2009

RESOLUTION I IMPROVE ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

We believe strongly that all Pennsylvanians have the right to full and open access to their government, its documents and its proceedings; and,

The state laws governing such access must continue to be monitored and improved; and,

The existing rights of access to meetings, records, and judicial proceedings continue to be routinely violated.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to continue our commitment to improving access to our government, including access to state and local government agency meetings, public records and judicial proceedings, to increase our grassroots and educational efforts, and to affirm our intention to participate fully in any and all efforts to improve legislation to that effect.

RESOLUTION II PROMOTE AND DEFEND NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICES

Public notices are an integral part of the content of every newspaper of general circulation and citizens are accustomed to finding public notices collected in their local newspapers; and,

Courts, administrative agencies, the business community and the general public recognize newspapers as the authoritative source and archive of public notices; and,

Free publications distributed by direct mail or home delivery without request and regardless of the recipients' preferences, publications commonly called "shoppers" or "pennysavers" are seeking the same statutory status as newspapers of general circulation under Pennsylvania public notice law; and,

We believe a public notice advertisement published in a shopper would not have the same significance, impact and value as a newspaper public notice advertisement has; and,

State and local governments in Pennsylvania and elsewhere are with increasing frequency attempting to replace newspaper public notices with digital announcements on a profusion of government sites; and,

While many Pennsylvania newspapers publish public notices on their own sites and on the MyPublicNotices.com site, there are millions of Pennsylvanians who depend upon their local newspapers for public notice information; and,

The enactment of legislation to curtail or eliminate newspaper public notices would be prejudicial to the interests of all citizens and their communities.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to reaffirm that newspaper public notices are an essential component of Pennsylvania's system of representative self-government of, by and for an informed and alert citizenry; and,

FURTHER, WE RESOLVE to oppose any legislative measure that would replace newspaper public notices with announcements posted on government sites; to draw attention to the public notices within our newspapers; to educate readers and legislators about the significance of newspaper public notice advertising; and, to participate in association efforts, such as MyPublicNotices.com, to preserve the publication of public notices by newspapers.

**RESOLUTION III
REMAIN VIGILANT DEFENDERS OF A FREE AND OPEN GOVERNMENT
IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE OVER SECURITY**

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the ensuing “war on terrorism” at home and abroad, there is a sea change underway in the definition of security, the right of the government in providing security, and the rights of others to obtain information;

We recognize the need for better security, and we support our public servants in this time of crisis, uncertainty and war; and,

We also recognize that our industry is like few others, as it is based on fundamental democratic principles: That information should flow freely from and about the government, that informed citizens make good citizens and that the strength of our nation is only as strong as the smallest of our communities; and,

Pennsylvania newspapers have always acted as a watchdog of government and the current climate should not chill our zealous undertaking of our traditional role.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to support our government during this time of uncertainty, although we shall not turn our backs on long-standing democratic principles and accept a diminishment of the public’s right of access to the government without a close examination of the vital interests at stake; and,

FURTHER, WE RESOLVE to extend a helping hand to any newspaper affected by this crisis if we are able, to allow all citizens of the Commonwealth to continue to be informed during these most threatening times.

**RESOLUTION IV
CONFRONT INCREASING ATTEMPTS TO ELEVATE INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY RIGHTS
OVER FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS**

We recognize that there is a strong movement throughout the country and this Commonwealth to strengthen individual privacy rights; and,

While we of course believe that all individuals in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States are entitled to some protection against the invasion of their privacy, we do not believe that in all instances privacy concerns should be deemed more compelling than all other societal concerns.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to confront the increasing attempts to elevate individual privacy rights over First Amendment rights of free speech and an unrestrained press and to redouble our efforts to perform our historical and constitutionally-recognized function to inform the public on the activities of their government, including their courts, their communities and their schools.

**RESOLUTION V
CONTINUE TO BUILD COALITIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS
THAT SHARE OUR VALUES**

In order to be effective in advancing our position on many issues including improving openness to public agencies and the courts, we recognize the importance of developing and advancing coalitions.

We recognize that we must unite with a number of different organizations and interest groups to be effective in educating the public and to be heard by the three branches of government.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to create and advance relationships with organizations that support our initiatives, so we can encourage awareness and promote our goals as an industry.

**RESOLUTION VI
RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY ADVERTISING PRACTICES**

We recognize that newspaper advertising is regulated by a complex mix of federal and state laws and that the burden of complying with these laws has in significant part fallen on the newspapers, and

We also recognize that advertising is a service to our readers and a source of revenue for our businesses, but that it also has an impact on the community.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to renew our commitment to quality advertising practices, including the adherence to all federal and state anti-discrimination laws, consumer protection laws, automobile sale and lease regulations, laws governing bingo, raffles and small games of chance, liquor and tobacco laws, as well as the exercise of care in attaining the highest achievable standards of decency that will enhance our reputations as responsible members of our communities.

**RESOLUTION VII
RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPING A DIVERSIFIED WORKFORCE
AND READERSHIP**

We have historically encouraged ourselves to develop a diversified workforce and to reflect the diversity of our communities in our coverage,

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to renew our commitment to developing a diversified workforce and to expanding our coverage to reflect the racial, gender, ethnic, ability, sexual orientation and age diversity of our readers, and to support the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association's Diversity Committee.

**RESOLUTION VIII
SUPPORT FOR ONLINE EFFORTS OF NEWSPAPERS**

WHEREAS, we recognize that the media industry is changing as a result of the Internet and digital communications technologies, and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania newspapers are adapting to these changes and striving to be leaders in these rapidly emerging and changing markets.

WE RESOLVE, THEREFORE, to assist Pennsylvania newspapers in meeting the challenges of the online marketplace and in expanding their products and coverage to be leaders in this arena, including, but not limited to, a commitment to strong branding, news content, multimedia projects, and advertising relationships.