



Councilmember Nick Licata

Contacts:

Lisa Herbold, Councilmember Licata's Office, 206.684.8803

Kimberly Reason, Council Communications, 206.684.8159

For Immediate Release:

January 26, 2009

Is it Curtains for Daily Newspapers in the Culture of Democracy and Citizen Discourse?

Councilmember Licata convenes panel discussion of media experts

SEATTLE – On Wednesday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m., Seattle City Councilmember Nick Licata will devote most of his Culture, Civil Rights, Health, and Personnel Committee meeting to a panel discussion about the importance of maintaining diverse media outlets, the future of daily newspapers, and the potential roles and responsibilities that a community can take to keep public discourse healthy and thriving. Presenters on the panel will be Roger Simpson and Douglas Underwood, Professors of Communication from the University of Washington; attorney Anne Bremner from the law firm Stafford Frey Cooper and Co-Chair of the Committee for a Two Newspaper Town; Beth Hester, programming manager for Seattle Channel; Liz Brown of the PacNW Newspaper Guild; David Brewster, Publisher of Crosscut; Jennifer Towery, President of the Peoria Newspaper's Guild; and Tracy Record, Editor and Publisher of the West Seattle Blog.

"I am particularly excited to hear about the efforts begun by an elected official in Illinois, Senator David Koehler, to put together a team in the community to study the problem of how to save their Peoria newspaper," said Councilmember Licata, Chair of the Committee that is hosting the discussion.

Towery will highlight the efforts of a team convened by Illinois Senator Koehler at a time of crisis for one of Peoria's daily newspapers. This effort includes participation by a second state senator, two state representatives, the economic adviser to a congressman, a former newspaper managing editor, the Peoria convention and visitors' bureau president, and several bank presidents. Their goal is to get their paper back on track. They have proposed legislation to open the door for community-owned newspapers through a "L3C" (low-profit, limited liability corporation).

Council meetings are cablecast live on Seattle Channel 21 and Webcast live on the City Council's website at www.seattle.gov/council. Copies of legislation, archives of previous meetings, and news releases are available on www.seattle.gov/council. Questions about Council news releases can be directed to Kimberly Reason, Council Communications, at 206-684-8159, or by e-mail at kimberly.reason@seattle.gov.