



Summary: Making Sense of Federal Policy Series

Funder Briefing: 6

Date: April 17, 2025

Topic: [Making Sense of Federal Policy: Understanding What it Means for NJ: Media & Journalism](#)

Speakers: **Chris Daggett**, Board Chair/Interim Executive Director - New Jersey Civic Information Consortium;
Vince Stehle, Executive Director — Media Impact Funders;

HIGHLIGHTS

Media Impact Funders – Vince Stehle

- Public broadcasting has always faced challenges historically but is currently under unprecedented threat.
- **Federal Funding Structure**
 - Radio – 7% of funding from federal grants
 - Public tv — 15% of funding from federal grants
 - Private funding has always been the source of revenue
 - Withdrawal of previously approved funds amounting to \$1.1 billion for public broadcasting
- **Impact of Funding Cuts on Local Media**
 - Smaller stations, which may rely on federal funding for more than 25% of their revenue will struggle significantly,
 - Communities will suffer
- **What Can Funders Do:**
 - Need for increased awareness and support for the media's role in democracy and the interconnectedness of global information systems.
 - Community development organizations should be used as trusted sources for local news
 - Support local initiatives that highlight positive community developments

New Jersey Civic Information Consortium – Chris Daggett

- History of NJTV public television and the need for a commercial television station in NJ
- NJ budget restraints and budget cuts
- \$6 million in state owned grant usually passed through to NJTV has been cut
- NJTV is crucial for many residents who depend on it for their primary news source, especially in light of decreasing journalism resources nationwide.
- The loss of COVID funding and ongoing federal cuts has led to significant budget deficits.
- Two key legislative efforts aimed at supporting local news: the public notice legislation and a proposed advertising bill that would require state entities to advertise in local news outlets.

- Importance of public notices for funding local news organizations, particularly in light of declining advertising revenues.
- **Challenges faced by the community:**
 - Without news, the community can't be kept informed, which could be a disaster in the long run.
- **The Role of Philanthropy:**
 - Need for funders to recognize the value of local news in enhancing community engagement and civic health.
 - Funders should remain engaged and proactive in supporting local news organizations, and community development organizations.
 - Funders contributions are vital for the health of democracy.
 - Continued support of journalism as a cornerstone of civic engagement and community well-being.