



International
Network of
Street Papers

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Dear Nashville Metro Council,

INSP (International Network of Street Papers) is concerned to hear of the proposed ordinance in Nashville banning sales of newspapers, magazines and periodicals to individuals in their cars. Our member street paper The Contributor stands to be severely affected should this ordinance pass, as many of their vendors sell their excellent publication in this manner.

We urge Nashville's Metro Council to reconsider this proposition and to recognise the pioneering work The Contributor has done in offering support and hope to local people experiencing poverty and homelessness.

Street papers are independent publications that provide employment opportunities and social programmes for people experiencing unemployment and homelessness. Vendors buy copies of the street paper at a price of 50% (or lower) than the cover price, then sell the street papers, keeping the proceeds. In addition to employment, many INSP street papers (including The Contributor) offer their vendors ongoing support and access to practical and social development resources and opportunities.

The 13,000 people currently selling street papers across the world are all micro-entrepreneurs, who have taken the opportunity of a viable alternative to panhandling.

INSP currently supports more than 100 street papers in some 36 countries. Street papers enable homeless and long term unemployed people to be actively employed and supported, thereby lessening their burden on the state. Many of our street papers enjoy a strong and positive partnership with their local and national governments. Working together, they have witnessed significant change and improvement in their community. Many of our members report a significant reduction in crime locally, due to the street paper providing individuals with a legitimate source of income, as well as stability in their lives.

The Contributor has been a member of INSP since 2008, and has continued to grow, following in the footsteps of established publications, such as The Big Issue in the UK, Hus Forbi in Denmark and Real Change in Seattle. Over the past two decades, street papers have given more than 250,000 people

the means to make a legitimate income. Worldwide, street paper vendors made more than \$38m in 2014.

INSP has been impressed with the creativity and innovation displayed by The Contributor's dedicated team. They recently won Best Breakthrough and Best Vendor Contribution at the INSP Awards 2015. Running a street paper is a challenging business, and the Best Breakthrough award reflected the extent to which The Contributor has stepped up their game in the last year, moving into a new phase and strengthening their operations. The judging panel loved their resilience and inventiveness and they were highly praised by a group that included: Kollin Min, senior programme officer for The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Mark Neil, creative director of Time Out London; Belinda Goldsmith, editor-in-chief of Thomson Reuters Foundation; and renowned photographer David Burnett.

In addition to their exceptional social impact, we strongly believe that The Contributor is a vital independent voice in the media landscape. They are frequent contributors to our INSP News Service, which allows street papers to share content and therefore work together in a global movement against poverty.

INSP believes that Nashville should be very proud to be home to such a dynamic and socially-aware paper. We urge you to do everything in your power to support The Contributor in giving the people of your fine city the chance to access steady employment and to transition out of homelessness and into housing. Or, as many of our members like to describe their work, ***A Hand Up not a Hand-Out.***

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maree Aldam', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Maree Aldam
INSP Chief Executive