Bill C-11 is once again receiving a lot of attention. From media to concerned Canadians, the wide array of opinions has made for quite a conversation. This week alone, the standing committee on Canadian Heritage is meeting for 20 hours on Bill C-11 alone. This emphasizes the importance of this bill and the potential impact it will have on Canadian content, Canadian internet, and the Canadian media landscape in the future. In the previous Parliament, we were successful in stopping bill C-10. The government insists that individual content posted online is exempt from this bill, but according to several experts including University of Ottawa Professor Michael Geist, the so-called user generated content (UGC) is in fact still subject to regulation by this bill.

Even the chair of the CRTC Iain Scott admitted during committee testimony that user generated content would be included in this bill.

In the same vein of Bill C-11, C-18 also contains provisions to do with the way online content is distributed and consumed. The bill requires compensation for facilitating access to news in any way and in any amount.

According to Professor Michael Geist: “Bill C-18 is a shakedown with requirements to pay for nothing more than listing Canadian media organizations with hyperlinks in a search index, social media post, or possibly even a tweet. At a time when we need the public to access credible news, Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez believes that large internet companies that engage in the act of facilitating access to news – not copying, not using, not even directly linking – should pay for doing so.”

“Bill C-18 is shamefully over-broad, an embarrassment to the news media lobby that demanded it, and unworthy of a government that sees itself as a model for the rest of the world on media freedoms.”

A scathing review if I’ve ever seen one.

If you think the government should not be allowed to regulate what you can/cannot see, post, or consume on the internet, call or email the office of the Minister of Heritage Pablo Rodriguez: Parliamentary office: p a b l o. rodriguez@parl.gc.ca 613-995-0580

Sincerely, Martin Shields MP Bow River