Utah Attorney General's Statement Regarding Joint Operating Agreement

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(SALT LAKE CITY, Utah) - The Utah Attorney General's Office confirmed today that it has an open investigation into the circumstances surrounding the recent amendment of the Joint Operating Agreement between the owners of the Salt Lake Tribune and the Deseret News.

"I believe in the value of diverse editorial viewpoints and independent news-gathering for an informed citizenry, and I asked our antitrust lawyers to investigate the circumstances surrounding the change to the Joint Operating Agreement," said Attorney General Sean Reyes. "We are not trying to duplicate or interfere with the DOJ investigation as it pertains to any area where they have statutory jurisdiction. But, there may be areas of concern outside of or concurrent with that scope, and we have an obligation to look at them more closely."

The investigation is being conducted by the newly formed Markets and Financial Fraud Division. Division Director David Sonnenreich said, "We recognize that the Newspaper Preservation Act of 1970 authorizes the United States Attorney General to review and approve Joint Operating Agreements between newspapers, but the state still has an independent interest in investigating and enforcing our antitrust laws outside of the scope of that federal review."

An investigation in and of itself does not indicate wrongdoing has occurred. In can be a mechanism to bring to light bad conduct or validate proper conduct.

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