

HB 1940 -- NEWSPAPERS

SPONSOR: McGaugh

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass by Consent" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 16 to 0. Voted "Do Pass-Consent" by the Standing Committee on Consent and Procedure by a vote of 8 to 0.

Currently, in order to qualify to run public notices and advertisements, a newspaper must have been published regularly for a period of three years; or must be the successor newspaper to a defunct newspaper and begin publication no later than 30 days after the termination of the prior newspaper.

This bill reduces the time period of regular publication from three years to one year, and increases the time period from 30 days to 90 days within which a successor newspaper must begin publication.

The bill also allows a newspaper that has been purchased or newly established by another newspaper that satisfies these conditions to qualify.

This bill is similar to HB 353 (2025) and HB 2301 (2024).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that, if the state is going to require the publication of public notices for a community, it's beneficial for the community if that publication can be made in a local newspaper. The current rules are some of the strictest in the nation. They make it very difficult for a local paper to gain the ability to run publications of public notices. Bringing the requirements in line with the vast majority of other states will benefit both the local papers and the communities they serve.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative McGaugh; Missouri Municipal League; Missouri Press Association; and Arnie Dienoff.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.