

HCS HB 2179 -- PUBLICATION OF PUBLIC NOTICES

SPONSOR: Casteel

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Legislative Review by a vote of 6 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2179.

This bill requires any county with a charter form of government to publish statutorily-required notices on the internet as well as in a newspaper.

The bill also requires the Secretary of State to develop a page on the office's website on which these notices can be accessed by the public.

Additionally, the bill permits political subdivisions or government entities required by law to publish a public advertisement, order of publication, legal notice, or any other notice in a newspaper to publish an identical notice on its official website and any social media accounts maintained for public notices. In addition to the newspaper publication, or if no qualifying newspaper exists or the newspaper fails or refuses to publish the notice after timely submission and payment, the digital publication constitutes valid and sufficient notice upon the filing of an affidavit of publication or attempted publication. Proof of the digital publication must be retained by the political subdivision for at least one year.

This bill is similar to HB 377 (2025).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill's intent is to provide an additional means of public notice, as newspapers experience smaller circulations year over year. It is much easier to circulate this information via social media or online methods. This is a compromise that places one foot in the future while keeping one foot in the past by not requiring all counties, just charter counties, to participate.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Casteel; Cory Hogan, Mo. State Council of Firefighters/Local 2665; and Fire Service Alliance.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill would duplicate a service already being provided by newspapers in which a website is updated with public notice advertisements that are published in newspapers, searchable by county, newspaper, and date range. Newspapers are experts when it comes to placing public notices, including the statutory requirements, affidavits, and proof of publication. Additionally, it is a critical revenue stream that newspapers would lose.

Testifying in person against the bill were Missouri Press Association; Armorvine; and Peggy Scott, Leader Publications.

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.