

Proposed Resolution on Newspaper vs. Electronic Reporting on Legal Matter

Whereas, the introduction of several pieces of legislation in the Tennessee General Assembly will move public notices, foreclosures, legal notices, public utilities non-payment for services, and other government announcements to online publications on government websites, Tennessee Secretary of State websites and possibly numerous other sites.

Whereas, it is fitting and proper to reach out to our elected officials to project how damaging this legislation is to the public's right to know, government transparency and our ability to continue providing readers in print with quality products.

Whereas, state law requires local governments to place legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation so governments cannot use online publications on their own websites as sole distributors of information. Citizens for decades have counted on the printed media for public notices for government meetings, bid solicitation, hearings, and financial disclosures to name a few.

Therefore be it resolved, that notices issued electronically could be manipulated or hidden on websites and would create hardships for citizens seeking information that now can be easily accessed in a newspaper. Many do not own a computer because of being disadvantaged and rural. Government websites do not have the protection of being able to verify that something appeared on the correct date allowing government to post notices when they choose.

Be it further resolved, that newspapers serve a vital service and help keep jobs for the workers in the paper industry in our state. Paper companies manufacture the paper, the forestry producers and harvest the trees, and nurserymen perform research and improve the product. There is a definite need for the newsprint.

Therefore, the State Executive Committee of the TN GOP recommend the members of the 107th General Assembly support legislation in favor of the newsprint industry.