

The Winfield Publishing Company, Inc.

March 12, 2015

Rep. Mark Hutton
Chairman, House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee
Kansas State Capitol
Topeka, KS 66606

RE: HB 2237

Dear Rep. Hutton:

This letter is written on behalf of the Arkansas City Traveler and the Winfield Daily Courier. Both newspapers publish public notices on behalf of several cities and taxing entities in Cowley County and our coverage area.

We are opposed to House Bill 2237, which would allow local government entities to publish notices to a website instead of a newspaper.

We question the availability of the Internet for many of our citizens who have been and are still loyal newspaper readers.

What about all those citizens — many older and lower income residents — who do not have easy access to the Internet? And what about those who choose not use computers or other electronic devices to find their news and information? In rural and semi-rural areas like ours, this potentially leaves out a big chunk of the population.

Posting notices only on a relatively obscure government website would limit convenient access for many people to important information about what local governments are up to.

It also seems to let governments off the hook by allowing them to passively post important, factual information, instead of proactively publishing them in a newspaper of general circulation that would bring more attention to the general public.

My guess is that cities and other entities would take the cheapest and most

convenient route for them and stop publishing notices in newspapers, if given the option.

In addition, we know newspaper publication is permanent and can be picked up, studied and re-read as many times as the reader wishes. A web posting can be deleted in a millisecond and "hacking" is a concern.

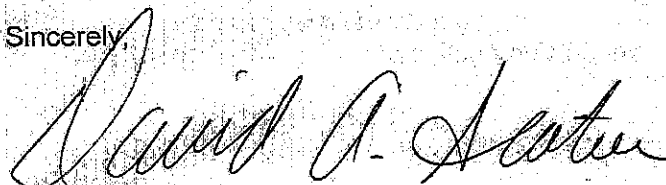
The current process adds trust and accountability into the process. Notices must be published by an independent, outside party (a newspaper) that creates a paper trail and verifiable record that can be used in a court of law.

Do we really want to trust the government itself to handle this important responsibility?

The Arkansas City Traveler and the Winfield Daily Courier have a longstanding commitment to keep our readers informed of factual information, which we strive to provide with every publication.

With these things in mind, I respectfully request that HB2237 be denied. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David A. Seaton
President, Winfield Publishing Co.

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