

THE SMOKE SIGNAL

Your Local Leader for News, Sports, Community

Over 10,000 Circulation

407 Lincoln Ave.
P.O. Box 267
Wamego, KS 66547

Ph.- 785-456-2602
Fax- 785-456-8484

email: office@wamegonews.com

Feb. 7, 2017

Kristey Williams, Chairman
House Local Government Committee

RE: Opposition to HB 2247 on public notice

Dear Representative Williams,

A public notice bill is in your committee and I'm writing to tell you why I feel it would be a great mistake to pass it.

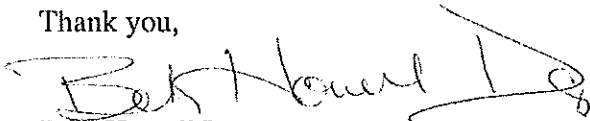
I am the editor of The Smoke Signal, one of the largest weekly newspapers in the state. We have over 10,000 circulation and cover the majority of Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee Counties. Since we are a "free distribution" paper, we are actually not legally able to be an "official" government newspaper. However, because of our wide circulation, we are sometimes asked to run legal notices alongside of the smaller papers, just so they reach the people.

That brings me to my point. Legal notices need to reach the people ... and they need to do so in a timely, and most importantly, unhackable, manner. The Internet is a great thing, but as we all know it is neither secure nor reliable. Just recently, some government sites were down, others were hacked. And those were sites that could afford massive security measures. I would put forth that small towns, school districts and counties would be much more vulnerable. Additionally, Internet data can be changed, a printed newspaper cannot.

Small town newspapers are the backbone of journalism in Kansas (along with the rest of the country). We need to preserve them, not destroy them. Along with the need for the legal notices reaching the people in a reliable way, the economic impact of this bill could be devastating to many small papers around the state. In fact, it could literally kill many small businesses.

I ask you to please consider the total effect of passing this bill, and not let it out of committee.

Thank you,



Beth Howell Day
Editor
The Smoke Signal

cc: Rep Ron Highland, Rep Francis Averkamp