

Sen. Nangle, Rep. Stover, members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Lorna Dee Nichols, and I am the Town Manager of Belgrade and Chair of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of New Sharon.

I am submitting written testimony today to speak in support of LD 422, An Act to Eliminate the Requirement That Municipalities Provide Public Notice in Newspapers.

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Towns routinely post notices for residents in areas where those same residents frequent in the towns in which they live. In addition, websites and social media are incredible tools used to reach a vast number of people in a very short amount of time – and in the case of social media – at no cost to the town.

As a former newspaper employee, I empathize with the fact this will take away some of the revenue used to keep these businesses running – however, the cost is very high and can amount to several thousand dollars in a budget year. In fact, we recently ran an in-column notice for three days in only one newspaper at a cost of almost \$600.00!

Understanding that rural Maine still has work to do with broadband access – there are more people with mobile devices than ever which gives them access to the web, too. Utilizing other means of communication to reach residents – where they live – and where they frequent the world wide web is far more effective without increasing costs to taxpayers.

We recently advertised a foreclosure property via the newspaper, our website and Facebook. I can tell you that our office received nearly one hundred phone calls – all stemming from the information provided via our website and social media – not the published notice in the newspaper. I tell you this to prove the point that we are able to reach infinitely more people in a variety of ways other than expending tax dollars in a print publication that now seems archaic.

I would appreciate your support in passing LD 422.

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