

MAINE SERVICE CENTERS COALITION

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Testimony of the Maine Service Centers Coalition LD 2042, An Act to Eliminate the Requirement for Municipalities to Provide Public Notice in a Newspaper

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, the Maine Service Centers Coalition is submitting testimony in support of LD 2042, An Act to Eliminate the Requirement for Municipalities to Provide Public Notice in a Newspaper.

The Maine Service Centers Coalition, comprised of 27 towns and cities across the state, articulates the importance of healthy and thriving service center communities, advocates for public policy that supports and contributes to the economic and social viability of our communities, and collaborates with municipal officials, legislators, state agencies and nonprofits to pursue quality of life for all who live and work in our state.

As you are aware, local newspapers have been disappearing and many of those that remain struggle to keep subscribers. For Maine municipalities, that means we are required to post public notices in newspapers, possibly located a good distance away from our cities and towns, being read by fewer people.

If passed, LD 2042 would provide us with an alternative: publish these notices on our own free, publicly accessible websites. Requiring public notices be available to all, without having to pay for a newspaper subscription, is a more equitable way for municipalities to circulate important information to our citizens.

It is also a more efficient and effective method to notify those most directly impacted – our residents. Municipalities will be able to post public notices in a timely manner rather than adhering to newspaper placement schedules. And, we will save taxpayers' dollars for what can add up to be considerable advertising costs.

For these reasons, the Maine Service Centers Coalition respectfully asks you to support LD 2042.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.