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

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

The Maine Mayors Coalition is a nonpartisan group representing the mayors of eleven Maine communities – Auburn, Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Rockland, Saco, Sanford, South Portland, Waterville and Westbrook – and nearly 300,000 residents. The Coalition advocates on behalf of our citizens and municipalities for policies that recognize the vital services Maine cities provide and the positive impact Maine cities have on our state. The Coalition seeks to work in partnership with state and federal elected officials to meet the needs of Maine people.

Our cities make every effort to ensure our citizens are kept informed of municipal matters, including posting public notices in newspapers as required by state law. Sadly, many parts of Maine no longer have daily newspapers serving their communities. In those areas that do, newspapers do not print every day of the week and instead offer online subscriptions. To meet state requirements for public notices, some municipalities must advertise in distant newspapers and must adjust work schedules to conform with newspapers' schedules.

Giving municipalities the option of posting on our own websites, as proposed in LD 2042, would be an efficient, and cost-effective, way to disseminate public notices. It would allow us to notify residents of the same state required information via platforms that are publicly accessible and free of charge. We also would have the advantage of using our notification services to send alerts directly to residents.

The Maine Mayors Coalition supports adding the proposed language to state statute, so we can more effectively notify citizens about important municipal issues. We urge you to vote ought to pass on LD 2042.

Thank you for your time.