

HB 782 -- PUBLICATION IN NEWSPAPERS

SPONSOR: McGaugh

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Government Efficiency and Downsizing by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

Currently, in order to qualify as legally acceptable to run public notices and advertisements, a newspaper must have been published regularly for a period of three years; or must be the successor newspaper to a defunct newspaper and began publication no later than 30 days after the termination of the prior newspaper.

This bill reduces the time period of regular publication from three years to one year, and increases the time period from 30 days to 90 days within which a successor newspaper must begin publication. The bill also allows a newspaper that has been purchased or newly established by another newspaper that satisfies these conditions to qualify.

This bill is the same as HB 2289 (2022).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the publication of public notices in newspapers is a vital component to transparency and good government. The relationship between local papers and political subdivisions is symbiotic, helping the former survive and the latter better serve their constituents. Shortening the time a paper must operate before it can start publishing public notices will bring Missouri in line with other states and allow the benefits of public notices to occur more quickly for small communities. Lengthening the time period for successor newspapers will give them more time to become established before taking on a large workload and public responsibility.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative McGaugh; Missouri County Collectors Association; Municipal League Metro St. Louis; and Missouri Press Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.