



SENATE BILL 2450

By Powers

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 1, Chapter 3 and Title 8, Chapter 44, relative to public notices.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 1-3-120, is amended by adding the following as a new subsection:

(g)

(1) Beginning July 1, 2027, the requirement to publish a notice in a newspaper of general circulation may be satisfied by a local government publishing the required notice electronically online, either by the local government or a third party. Electronic public notice systems must provide easy, equitable, and barrier-free access for all users across commonly used platforms.

(2) In order to utilize electronic publication for a required notice, a local government shall:

(A) Pass an ordinance or resolution detailing the date electronic publication of notices will begin, how the public can access the notices, and what types of notices will be published electronically; and

(B) Adopt a policy governing the posting of notices electronically.

(3) The electronic online publications made under this subsection (g) must be accessible to the public free of charge.

(4) An electronic public notice system policy adopted under subdivision (g)(2)(B) must:

(A) Ensure the security, reliability, integrity, and maintenance of the system and published notices and records to verify compliance with public notice requirements;

(B) Specify clear, legally compliant timeframes that govern the posting, archiving, and retention of public notices and related records;
and

(C) Standardize a legally compliant format and appearance for electronically published notices, including supplemental information that may be posted with such notices.

(5) Operators of third-party websites permitting local governments to post electronic notices on the third party's website may charge a reasonable fee for such service.

(6) A public notice that is specifically required by law to be published in a newspaper or periodical of general circulation must be published in compliance with such law.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect on July 1, 2026, the public welfare requiring it.

Amendment No. 1 to SB2450

Briggs
Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 2450

House Bill No. 2114*

by deleting all language after the enacting clause and substituting:

SECTION 1.

(a) The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) shall conduct a study to determine if newspapers of general circulation remain the most efficient and effective manner for governments to provide the public with transparent and accessible information. This study must also examine how the efficiency of public notice methods has changed historically.

(b) TACIR shall further study how the public has historically obtained its news and information compared to today. This will include how the number of newspapers has changed in Tennessee, how their publication frequency has changed, and whether the number of subscribers as a percentage of the population has changed historically.

(c) TACIR shall examine the ability of government entities to create public notice systems, including their ability to maintain permanent public archives, protect against data corruption, and ensure independent verification of publication. TACIR shall also review the costs associated with government entities maintaining online public notice platforms.

(d) TACIR shall review all governmental and public entities' notice requirements and practices to determine how much taxpayer money is used to meet newspaper publication requirements in this state. The study must also examine if citizens should be required to pay a subscription fee to access information that is intended to provide notice and transparency of government actions.

(e) TACIR shall consider how the availability of broadband access across the states, especially in rural communities, may affect the publication of online public notices.

(f) TACIR shall review public notice practices in other states and any available trends or advances in technology. This will include whether any new practices have affected transparency, government accountability, the impact on rural communities, or civic participation in those states.

(g) TACIR shall consult with interested parties regarding the subject of this study. Those interested parties must include, but are not limited to, local governments, newspaper publishers, the Tennessee Press Association, representatives from rural communities, government entities in other states that publish notices online, and open government advocates.

(h) TACIR may request information and input from state and local governmental entities, as necessary, and such entities shall comply with TACIR's request. The study must be conducted from within TACIR's existing resources.

(i) Upon completion of the study required by this section, TACIR shall report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the chair of the state and local government committee of the senate, the chair of the committee of the house of representatives having jurisdiction over subject matters pertaining to state and local government, and the legislative librarian. The report may be delivered electronically.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.