

April 29, 2025

The Honorable Nathan Manning
Judiciary Committee Chair
Ohio Statehouse
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for allowing the Coalition of Ohio Daily Law Journals, which represents the interests of the daily legal newspapers in Ohio, to address our concerns regarding Senate Bill 135.

We appreciate the recognition of our role as a necessary part of the foreclosure process, per the requirement for first publications of foreclosure notices to be published in newspapers. However, we are concerned about the proposed legislation allowing second and third publications of public notices to appear on random websites, whether those belong to a county office or individual private selling officers. Public notices need to be placed where people can easily find them. Newspapers have had the responsibility of posting such information for more years than any of us have been alive, but newspapers also have evolved to keep up with an internet-driven society.

The proposal to reduce the required number of publications of printed notices seems to be due to a misunderstanding of the purpose of public notices. While these notices commonly are referred to in legislation as “advertisements,” they are not and cannot be considered as such. Public notices are not a marketing tool. To say they don’t generate sales leads implies a total misunderstanding of their intent.

The purpose of true “advertising” — whether it be a large ad, a classified or an online ad — most definitely is to generate leads or build name recognition. The purpose of public notices is to provide citizens with information about government actions, decisions and impending government activity or legal action that potentially have an impact on those citizens’ lives. The printed notice serves as proof that due process, as required by the U.S. Constitution, was provided in an accurate and timely manner.

Providing unbiased third-party oversight, print newspapers create a permanent, unalterable record of public notices. These printed notices not only give assurance to the public, but give government officials and agencies legal evidence against accusations of providing incomplete or untimely information, or of altering records.

Furthermore, the cost of the public notice, generally less than \$500 for three publications, is a small price for ensuring that due process was served. Before newspapers can print and submit the notices to the state legislature-mandated public notice website (which is available to the public at no cost) they often have to create them from pages of court documents in order to extract all of the necessary, legally required information. After the notice is created and published, newspapers file notarized affidavits with the courts, ensuring that this important step of due process was performed according to law. It’s not as simple as posting that ubiquitous “for sale” ad.

We urge you to strike SB 135’s clauses reducing the number of print publications required for these vital notifications. Please allow newspapers to continue serving as a trusted, combined repository of public notice information for all Ohioans. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Shillingburg
Publisher, The Daily Reporter (Columbus, Ohio)
Representing the Coalition of Ohio Daily Law Journals