

# Planning and Development Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5359

AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY OF PERMITTING THE

**Title:** ONLINE ADVERTISEMENT OF LEGAL NOTICES BY MUNICIPALITIES.

**Vote Date:** 3/18/2022

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/9/2022

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Planning and Development Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

HB 5359 requires the Office of Policy and Management to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of permitting the online advertisement of legal notices by municipalities. Currently, there are statutes in place requiring municipalities to publish legal notices in newspapers. This in turn costs municipalities thousands of dollars of funding. If this Study's outcome concludes that online advertisement of legal notices could be more accessible, and therefore reach a larger proportion of the public than the current newspaper platform, then further legislation can be proposed to allow municipalities the chance to post their legal notices online. This hypothetical legislation could save municipalities money while streamlining notices to the public.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns** Ms. Gara voiced support for HB 5359, as it would be another step closer to allowing municipalities to post legal notices online, rather than publishing them in newspapers. This in turn could save thousands of dollars in funds, and allow for greater public accessibility to legal notices.

**Michael Glidden, Vice President/Legislative Liaison, Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcements Officials (CAZEO)** Mr. Glidden voiced support for HB 5359, as it would create a study that would hopefully generate a favorable report towards the idea of municipalities posting legal notices online. It is Mr. Glidden's belief that if municipalities post legal notices online, said notices would become more accessible for the public, saving the municipalities thousands of dollars.

**Donna Hamzy Carroccia, Advocacy Manager, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM)** Donna Hamzy Carroccia recommends that HB 5359 be amended to allow the posting of an advertisement of a legal notice on a municipality's web site. CCM believes that municipalities need quicker relief from the outdated mandate to publish legal notices in the newspaper, and that a study isn't necessary. They further express that the state itself has moved to paperless systems in many ways, and that it is time for towns and cities to follow suit.

**John Guskowski & Emmeline Harrigan, Govt. Relations Committee co-chairs, Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA)** Mr. Guskowski & Ms. Harrigan voiced support for HB 5359, as it would be a step closer to allowing municipalities to post legal notices online rather than by newspaper. CCAPA believes that this would save a large amount of funding, while also reaching more of the public through an effective system. They further state that provisions be added after the study concludes and authorization occurs, so as to make the municipality websites navigable when posting legal notices.

**Essie Labrot, West Hartford Town Clerk, Connecticut Town Clerks Association** Ms. Labrot voiced support for HB 5359 as the study could lead to municipalities being able to post legal notices online, and conclude with an outcome that will assist municipalities in cutting current costs and giving a wider range of options when posting said notices.

#### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Ben McSheehy**

**Date: March 24, 2022**