



GS Publishing, LLC

Grant County News | Carson Press

P.O. Box 100, Elgin, ND 58533 701.584.2900

Adams County Record | Hettinger County Herald

P.O. Box 749 Hettinger, ND 58639 701.567.2424

Golden Valley News | Billings County Pioneer

P.O. Box 156 Beach, ND 58621 701.872.3755

Morton County News Journal

P.O. Box 416, New Salem, ND 58563 701.843.7567

Chairman Longmuir and Committee members,

My name is Jill Friesz, owner of GS Publishing, LLC. I own and operate seven weekly newspapers in the southwest corner of the state, and I am advocating for all newspapers and readers from the state of North Dakota.

I am OPPOSED to House Bill 1380.

As you can see by the 2022 official election results, the voters in my coverage area have spoken, and they want the county commission proceedings published in the official county newspaper.

Grant County - 1,119 ballots cast - 973 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Morton County - 11,358 ballots cast - 6,648 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Sioux County - 584 ballots cast - 360 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Hettinger County - 1,037 ballots cast - 917 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Adams County - 929 ballots cast - 809 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Golden Valley County - 778 ballots cast - 612 votes to publish in the official county newspaper
Billings County - 537 ballots cast - 464 votes to publish in the official county newspaper

The job of the newspapers in North Dakota is to be the watchdog of the communities we serve. We believe in transparency and accountability and take this position very seriously. Having access to and understanding local government proceedings helps residents stay informed about important issues such as budget allocations, infrastructure projects, and community programs. This knowledge is essential for residents to advocate for their needs and priorities effectively.

I am frequently tasked with reaching out to County Auditors to remind them to submit proceedings for publication. If they are not required to publish in official newspapers, where is the accountability? Websites can be cumbersome to maneuver, while others are not updated in a timely manner, if they exist at all. The communities in my coverage area have a large elderly population, many who do not have access to a computer or skills to navigate technology. Part of our role in the community is to be the local historian. By printing the commission proceedings, we are keeping a record of the actions taken in our county government to be preserved for future generations.

Once again, I urge you to recognize the significance of publishing county commission proceedings in local newspapers and consider a DO NOT PASS on HB 1380. By doing so, we promote transparency, enhance accountability, encourage civic engagement, support local journalism, and foster a more informed community.

Sincerely,

Jill M. Friesz
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