

March 13, 2025

SB 2069 Testimony

Terry Schwartzenberger - Owner and Publisher Napoleon Homestead

Chairman and members of the committee:

Thanks for allowing me to address SB 2069. As being in the newspaper industry for 40+ years and a second-generation owner, I've seen a variety of attempts to eliminate the need to publish legal notices in newspapers.

I am urging a no vote on SB 2069. This bill would open a door to have all public notices published on a government web site, eliminating the need to publish notices in newspapers. For more than 100 years newspapers have been the source of news, advertising and legal notices. Newspapers have been the go-to medium as a recent poll shows 85% of those surveyed said legal notices should be required to be published in newspapers. And of those surveyed, 83% said they read newspapers. This is an overwhelming majority of North Dakotans who continue to look to newspapers, to be the provider of information. Notices can be easily found in the pages of each issue as well as on the ND Newspaper Association website (ndpublicnotices.com).

In the four plus decades of being able to publish public notices in the pages of this weekly paper, known to those in the south-central part of the state as the Napoleon Homestead, I've heard from readers that they are glad to read about the happenings of their local government entities in their local newspaper.

It has been my privilege and honor to be able to provide a service to rural North Dakota citizens who are the individuals footing the tax bill for their political subdivisions. Taxpayers want to know and have a right to know what their local government agencies are doing, and newspapers have been providing that source of information and would like to continue to provide that service.

The median age of a resident in Logan County is 49.2 (according to 2022 data). Many of the Logan County folks are older and live without internet access or don't have any knowledge about using the internet and will not be able to access public notices on-line.

I believe SB 2069 is a bill that should receive a DO NOT pass vote as it takes away the citizens right in Logan County and all of North Dakota the ease of access to official government public notices.

Thank for your time and consideration.

Terry Schwartzenberger

Publisher/Owner – Napoleon Homestead

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