

Dear House Industry, Business and Labor Committee members Reps Lefor, Keiser, Adams, Anderson, Hagert, Kasper, Louser, Nehring, O'Brien, Ostlie, Ruby, Schauer, Stemen, Thomas,

I am going to take a few minutes to tell you my concerns about HB 1062. I feel that this is a bad bill and you should vote no on it. Anytime that there is a move to remove legal notices from public and permanent access it is never a good thing.

- **Insurance public notice legals are \$670,000 from out-of-state insurance companies that goes directly to community newspapers and benefits small businesses and the communities that they are in.**
- **The point of public notices is for the public to have access to them and see them; insurance websites are not popular or easy to navigate. Newspapers are also a permanent unchangeable document once printed.**
  - **86% of North Dakotans read newspapers, according to a 2020 statewide survey, and 88% say they read public notices in newspapers**
  - **34% of seniors in the U.S. do not use the internet; 22% of folks in rural areas don't go online, and 35% who didn't graduate from high school don't use the internet (2018, Pew Research Center)**
- **Lastly I represent the states many small weekly newspapers. I am in a small, rural community and am one of the smallest newspapers in the state. The small weeklies have been hit the hardest by the economy down turn as we have seen many of our businesses that once brought in advertising dollars and provided employment to members of the community close. As the small weeklies lose this business the importance of these annual legal notices has been an important component to keeping our newspapers and businesses going. This annual boost in revenue helps keep my newspaper operating for several months. It also provides extra money for necessary equipment upgrades that would not otherwise be affordable on a shoe string budget. The loss of this income could be the final straw for myself and/or other small town community newspapers that will force us to close our doors for good.**

The loss of small town community newspapers would be devastating to the communities they serve as they are the only ones reporting on community events, celebrations, small town school and sporting events. We provide an invaluable service to our communities and can not afford anymore economic hits to our already dwindling incomes.

Thank you for your time and for considering my point of view.

*Thank you,  
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