



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401  
ST. MARY'S COUNTY DELEGATION

Delegate Shane Pendergrass  
Chairman, House Health and Government Operations Committee  
Annapolis, MD

**HB 523-St. Mary's County – Newspaper or Newspaper in General Circulation – Definition**

**Favorable**

Chairman Pendergrass and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to bring before you HB 523-St. Mary's County – Newspaper or Newspaper in General Circulation – Definition

This legislation will amend the definition of a newspaper in St. Mary's County to include free papers.

**WHY it's needed**

St. Mary's County has always had a robust newspaper system until about 3 years ago when the county newspaper stopped being delivered and started being mailed bi-weekly. Unfortunately, this resulted in the paper being delivered 2 days past the publishing date on the paper.

Subsequently, in June of 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the local county paper stopped being published, and instead became a regional paper including neighboring counties. It was published 1 day a week and is mailed to recipients, resulting again in citizens receiving the news 2 days after the publishing date.

This has become a problem because of the requirement that all legal notices be published in (paid) newspapers. Our citizens are not receiving these notices in a timely fashion.

There is a widely circulated newspaper in St. Mary's County, called the County Times. However this newspaper is a free publication. They make their revenue, not in subscriptions, but in paid advertising and coupons for the local grocery.

St. Mary's County asks that the definition of newspaper be amended to include free papers, for the ability to post the County's legal notices in a viable and timely manner for the citizens of the county to be able to receive.

The legislation was requested by the St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners and has the unanimous support of the St. Mary's County Delegation.

We ask that the committee pass the HB 523 out of committee with a FAVORABLE report.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Matt Morgan  
Delegate