

SB 520. Legislative Notice. Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Danielle Mitchell

Position: FAV



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
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Mark Belton
County Administrator

February 27, 2023

Bill: SB 520 – Code Counties – Legislative Procedure – Notice Requirements
Committee: Senate – Education, Energy, and the Environment
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chairwoman Kagan, and Members:

It is our sincere pleasure to support passage of SB 520 Code Counties – Legislative Procedure – Notice Requirements.

SB 520 ensures posting notifications for newly introduced legislation and enacted legislation is sufficient when the bill is posted to an internet website ordinarily used by the public body to provide information to the public. The bill amends Local Government Art.§ 9-311, to allow for posting to an internet website used by the governing body to be used rather than a bulletin board in the building where the legislative body convenes meetings. Additionally, the bill allows for posting to an internet website used by the governing body in lieu of running enactment notices upon approval of legislation.

The reality is that the public receives information today very differently than when this provision of the Local Government Article was originally enacted. Reliance on the internet as opposed to a newspaper will best serve the public interest and allow us to continue to meet our legal obligation without concern for the increasingly infrequent newspaper circulation in many counties. Further, our community members will be better informed and less inconvenienced by having information about legislative matters at their fingertips, as opposed to traveling to our building, or purchasing a newspaper that does not print daily editions.

We encourage a favorable committee report on SB 520. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our full support.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., written in a cursive style.

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Delegation

HB1033 & SB520 - Code Counties - LOS.pdf

Uploaded by: Kaleigh Leager

Position: FAV



CAROLINE COUNTY
you belong here
CAROLINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

JAMES TRAVIS BREEDING, PRESIDENT
LARRY C. PORTER, VICE PRESIDENT
NORMAN FRANKLIN BARTZ, III., COMMISSIONER
109 Market Street, Room 123
Denton, Maryland 21629

House Bill 1033/Senate Bill 520
Code Counties – Legislative Procedure – Notice Requirements

Position: **SUPPORT**
Date: February 28, 2023
To: Environment and Transportation

The Caroline County Commissioners **SUPPORT** HB 1033/SB 520 Code Counties – Legislative Procedure.

The Commissioners of Caroline County support the Charles County Delegation for Code Home Rule Counties amending the requirements for legislative notices. Currently, the County spends thousands of dollars annually on publication costs for legislative notices.

This legislation will enable Code Home Rule Counties the option to post legislative notices on their county websites and/or printed publications. With the passage of this legislation, Caroline County will be able to reallocate those funds to other areas to serve our constituents in our underserved and overburdened community where every penny counts.

With this, the Caroline County Commissioners respectfully request a favorable report on HB1033/SB520.

Sincerely,

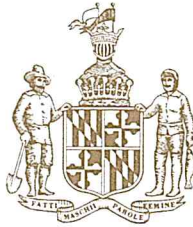
J. Travis Breeding
President
Caroline County Commissioners

Jackson2023SB520Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
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Calvert, Charles and
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Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and
Environment

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

District Office
250 Merrimac Court
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678

TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 520

***CODE COUNTIES – LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE –
NOTICE REQUIREMENTS***

EDUCATION, ENERGY, & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 520 is a very straightforward Charles County delegation bill that simply enables code home rule counties to publish notices of bill hearings on county websites and repeals related requirements to publish said notices in newspapers on bulletin boards within county government offices.

This is a Charles County Delegation legislative priority as the members of our delegation believe that it would act as an effective way to increase efficiency in local government while at the same time eliminating the cost of newspaper advertising to our code home rule counties.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 520.

MDDC Oppose SB520.pdf

Uploaded by: Rebecca Snyder

Position: UNF



Maryland | Delaware | DC Press Association

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To: Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee

From: Rebecca Snyder, Executive Director, MDDC Press Association

Date: February 28, 2023

Re: SB 520 - OPPOSE

The Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Press Association represents a diverse membership of newspaper publications, from large metro dailies such as the Washington Post and the Baltimore Sun, to hometown newspapers such as the Star Democrat and Maryland Independent, to publications such as The Daily Record, Baltimore Jewish Times, and online-only publications such as Bethesda Beat, MarylandReporter.com and Baltimore Brew.

The Press Association urges the Committee to reject SB 520. This is a **state-wide bill** that would require passed local legislation (or a fair summary) be published in a newspaper for three weeks OR be posted physically on an official bulletin board OR on a website used by the county commissioners to provide information to the public. Further, the bill stipulates that the passed legislation only need stay on the government website for four weeks. This would be a change from current practice, where passed legislation is published in a newspaper of general circulation once a week for three weeks.

More notice is better notice. The bill could be improved by changing OR to AND on page three, line 21. As written, this statewide bill would push critical information out of newspapers and their websites in favor of a significantly smaller reach county website or an even smaller reach bulletin board. Public notices should be independent, accessible, verifiable, and reach the widest possible audience to ensure trust in the process and information. This bill is bad public policy and will short change the public's right to know.

Local government has a vested interest in ensuring that the public knows about new laws, among other topics, and that means publicizing to the largest possible audience. This bill takes notice of new laws out of the newspaper and its website (and its archive) and into a specific government website. The public looks for this type of information among other news and information, not in a website where the information is only available for a short period of time and does not reach a broad cross section of the public. This bill would also allow simply the posting of the law on a bulletin board in the government building.

This legislation also fails the other best practices of public notice. It is not independent, or verifiable, as websites can be hacked and inaccessible, and there is no provision for an affidavit.

We urge an unfavorable report.



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