

A Resolution Advocating New York State Senate and Assembly Support of Legislation to Allow the Online Publication of Public Notices

RESOLUTION #2024-_____

Whereas, the Town of Enfield currently designates the Ithaca Journal as its official newspaper pursuant to the definition of a Newspaper currently set forth in NYS General Construction Law Article 2; and

Whereas, small daily print newspapers across the United States and in New York State have seen significant reductions in staffing and capacity to cover local news events, leading to lower subscriber numbers, and a lower volume of locally-relevant stories and features; and

Whereas, research shows that most Americans consume news and information through media and online sources, and that daily newspaper journals have decreased in readership; and

Whereas, there is growing interest among Enfield Town Board members and Town officers to consider alternative options for official public notice that reach a wider audience; and

Whereas, this Town Board expresses its desire to increase access to public notice and important public information, which requires finding new ways to disseminate information in both print and digital formats; and

Whereas, New York State Senator Patrick Gallivan and Assemblymember Stephen Hawley have introduced proposed legislation in the New York State Legislature's 2023-2024 Session, Senate Bill S00125 and Assembly Bill A02067, respectively, each that would satisfy the requirement for which publication of any fact by law to be published or advertised in a newspaper would be alternately satisfied by publication of the notice in an online news publication meeting certain criteria; and

Whereas, these bills would permit the Town to publish notices with other local newspapers with an online presence, increasing access to public information and supporting more local journalism, and

Whereas, enabling the Town of Enfield the opportunity to publish public notices through online outlets would likely save the Town considerable resources and provide the Town Clerk added flexibility in scheduling those notices' publication; and

Whereas, on November 21, 2023, the Tompkins County Legislature unanimously adopted a Resolution urging the New York State Legislature to enact these bills or their equivalents for the reasons herein stated; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Enfield Town Board supports New York State Senate Bill S00125 and Assembly Bill A02067, or equivalent legislation accomplishing these bills' stated purpose and encourages their passage by the Senate and Assembly and their subsequent signing by the Governor; and be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, NYS Senate Bill S00125 Sponsor New York State Senator Patrick Gallivan, NYS Assembly Bill A02067 Sponsor New York State Assemblymember Stephen Hawley, New York State Assemblymember Anna Kelles, New York State Senator Lea Webb, the Association of Towns of the State of New York, and the Hon. Daniel Klein, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature.