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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT

Introduced By: Senator Maryellen Goodwin

Date Introduced: May 20, 2021

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 42 of the General Laws entitled "STATE AFFAIRS AND  
2 GOVERNMENT" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 8.3

4 MODERNIZATION OF PUBLICATION OF LEGAL NOTICES, ADVERTISEMENTS, AND

5 OTHER WRITTEN MATTERS

6 **42-8.3-1. Purpose.**

7 The purpose of this chapter is to modernize the publication of legal notices and  
8 advertisements within the state and expand the public's access to such publications, such that  
9 publication or posting in accordance with this chapter shall substitute and satisfy the requirements  
10 for the publication of any statutorily-required notice, advertisement, or other written matter in a  
11 newspaper.

12 **42-8.3-2. Definitions.**

13 As used in this chapter:

14 (1) "Official website" means the official Internet website that is maintained by the  
15 Secretary and established in accordance with the rules and regulations promulgated in accordance  
16 with § 42-8.3-5.

17 (2) "Person" means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, legal entity,  
18 municipality, or public body. The term "person" shall also mean any authorized employee or agent  
19 of any such individual, corporation, partnership, association, legal entity, municipality, or public

1 body.

2 (3) "Secretary" means the department of state.

3 **42-8.3-3. Official website for publication of legal notice.**

4 Notwithstanding any provision of the general or public laws to the contrary, any notice,  
5 advertisement, or other written matter required to be published by any law of this state in a  
6 newspaper shall be deemed to satisfy such requirement if published or posted on the official  
7 website.

8 **42-8.3-4. Costs.**

9 There shall be no cost associated with the publication or posting of any notice,  
10 advertisement, or other written matter on the official website.

11 **42-8.3-5. Rules and Regulations.**

12 (a) No later than one hundred twenty (120) days after the enactment of this chapter, the  
13 secretary shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this chapter.

14 (b) Such rules and regulations shall include:

15 (1) The ability to search the official website by statutory cite, keyword, and date of  
16 publication or posting;

17 (2) A mechanism by which the official website can send a subscribing person email  
18 notifications, including a choice of how often to receive such notifications and the option to  
19 terminate such notifications;

20 (3) A mechanism by which a person can submit a notice, advertisement, or other written  
21 matter for publication or posting on the official website; and

22 (4) A mechanism that prohibits the alteration or manipulation of any original notice,  
23 advertisement, or other written matter on the official website.

24 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage; provided, however, that the official  
25 website shall become operative on January 1, 2022.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT

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1           This act would allow the publication of legal notices on the state's official website, which  
2 would satisfy the requirements for the publication of any statutorily-required notice, advertisement,  
3 or other written matter in a newspaper.

4           This act would take effect upon passage; provided, however, that the official website would  
5 become operative on January 1, 2022.

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