

# GOP bill would keep public notices in KY newspapers

BY MCKENNA HORSLEY  
KENTUCKY LANTERN

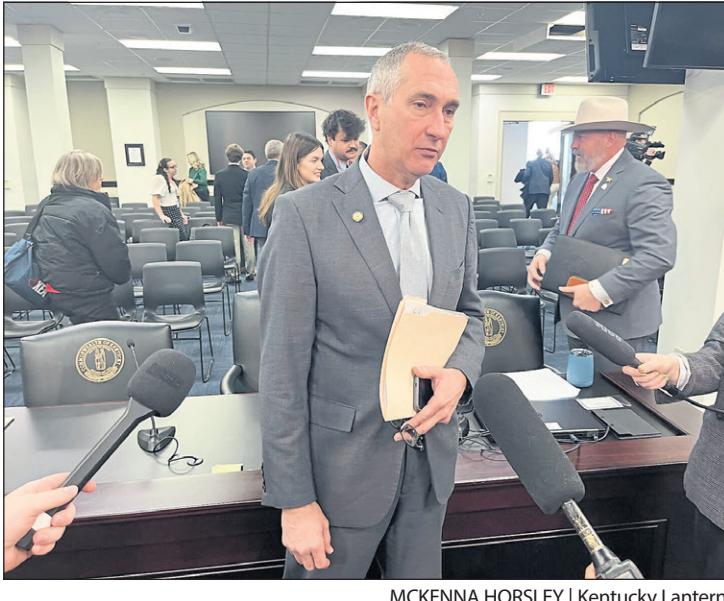
Republican Senate President Pro Tem David Givens is sponsoring a bill that would end a battle between Kentucky newspapers and local governments over legal advertisements.

Senate Bill 141 is backed by the Kentucky Press Association, the Kentucky League of Cities and the Kentucky Association of Counties. If enacted by the General Assembly, the measure would update Kentucky's laws regarding public notices, also called legal ads.

The bill passed out of the Senate State and Local Government Committee with bipartisan support Wednesday morning. It now awaits a floor vote in the Senate.

Many government agencies are required to issue a range of public notices in the local newspaper of record, including meeting notices, changes to tax rates, competitive bid solicitations, proposed ordinances, master commissioner sales, estate filings and utility rate increases.

Some local officials have questioned why taxpayer dollars should be spent on legal ads when they could be posted for free on government websites. Newspapers and advocates for open government counter that government transparency and the public interest demand



Senate President Pro Tempore David Givens, R-Greensburg, speaks to reporters after a Senate Education Committee meeting.

that a neutral third party be responsible for publishing the notices and that not everyone has access to a computer. The controversy arose as newspapers face financial strains, consolidations and closures in recent years.

"We're celebrating something that doesn't always happen in Frankfort, and that's agreement," Givens recently told reporters.

Givens said the bill is "an agreement between local governments at the county and city level and the press association about what notices should be published and what the cost should be." He added

that concerns about citizens having access to information are valid, and so are concerns about taxpayers' money spent on public notices.

"I give credit to Kentucky Press Association, Kentucky League of Cities and Kentucky Association of Counties, as they came together and found a way to achieve the best possible answer to a question where there was some conflict initially, so I'm excited about it going forward," Givens said.

Among the changes proposed in SB 141, newspapers of record must publish a legal ad in the first print edi-

tion after receiving it from a government agency or within seven days of receiving the ad, whichever is first. Newspapers must also publish the ads online within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) on the papers' websites and the press association's kypublicnotice.com.

Legislation on legal ads has been filed in recent years, though the bills have not been passed by the General Assembly.

Last year, a bill that would have allowed local governments to publish some notices on their own website and bypass the paper of record was filed but did not get a committee hearing.

Mike Scogin, the president of the Kentucky Press Association (KPA), said the legislation is "truly a win-win bill for all of Kentucky." The notices will still be in print and must be online.

"There were compromises on all sides, but ultimately, I believe we have a bill that benefits everyone, especially the public," he said. "We are grateful to Sen. Givens for sponsoring the bill. The legislation has strong support and is truly an example of a group of civic-minded organizations working together for the public's best interests."

In a statement, the Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) told the Lantern it appreciated the work by all parties "to

reach a compromise that preserves transparency and public notice while continuing our efforts to modernize outdated processes."

"We believe SB 141 strikes a good balance among the shared goals of having public notices reach the most constituents while also working to preserve limited public resources," KLC said.

Shellie Hampton, the director of government affairs for the Kentucky Association of Counties (KACo), also said the bill was a "collaborative effort" between the organizations "to balance local government public notice requirements in an increasingly digital age, while working through cost-effective options that preserve transparency, provide the same level of public information, and help reduce costs to taxpayers."

"We appreciate the efforts of KPA and KLC for their work to reach consensus," Hampton said. "We are grateful to Sen. Givens for sponsoring the bill on our behalf and we look forward to seeing it through."

The Kentucky Lantern is a member of the Kentucky Press Association.

This article was originally published by the Kentucky Lantern, a nonprofit news site covering state government and politics, at kentuckylantern.com.



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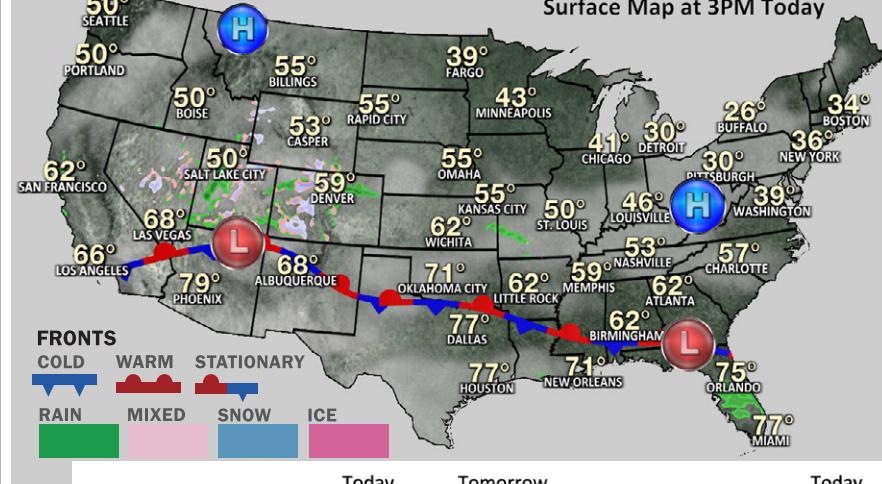
\* Cleaning Included in Absence of Gum Disease



## 5-DAY FORECAST

Today	Tonight	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Increasing clouds	Mostly cloudy	Mostly sunny	PM rain likely (80%)	Partly sunny AM showers (50%)	Mostly sunny
51°	34°	57°	53°	55°	60°
		39°	45°	41°	45°

## AROUND THE NATION



### NATIONAL SUMMARY:

Aside from a few rain and snow showers over the Rockies, most of the country will be dry today. Colder in the Northeast, with milder temperatures for the remainder of the country.

**REGIONAL SUMMARY:** Clouds will increase today, but sunshine is back tomorrow. Rain is on the way for the weekend, with up to 1-2" of rain expected.

### ALMANAC

PADUCAH THROUGH 5 P.M. YESTERDAY	
HIGH: 51°	LOW: 36°
TODAY'S AVERAGE TEMPERATURE	
HIGH: 49°	LOW: 30°
TODAY'S RECORD TEMPERATURE	
HIGH: 73° (1999)	LOW: 2° (2011)
PRECIPITATION	
24 HRS.....	0.00"
THIS MONTH-TO-DATE.....	0.00"
NORMAL MONTH-TO-DATE.....	1.38"
THIS YEAR-TO-DATE.....	1.73"
NORMAL YEAR-TO-DATE.....	5.23"
+/ - YEAR-TO-DATE.....	3.50"
LAST YEAR-TO-DATE.....	5.49"

### SUN & MOON

NEW FEB 17	1ST QTR FEB 24	FULL MAR 3	3RD QTR MAR 11
SUNRISE.....	6:47 AM		
SUNSET.....	5:32 PM		
MOONRISE.....	3:38 AM		
MOONSET.....	12:43 PM		

City	Today Hi/Lo/Wx	Tomorrow Hi/Lo/Wx	City	Today Hi/Lo/Wx	Tomorrow Hi/Lo/Wx
Atlanta	65°/40°	65°/38°	Las Vegas	67°/51°	68°/45°
Birmingham	64°/39°	67°/42°	Lexington	44°/24°	50°/27°
Charlotte	60°/34°	56°/29°	Little Rock	62°/37°	68°/48°
Chicago	40°/28°	51°/28°	Los Angeles	65°/51°	70°/53°
Dallas	77°/55°	80°/61°	Louisville	46°/27°	53°/27°
Denver	60°/33°	58°/36°	Memphis	61°/38°	67°/47°
Evansville	47°/28°	54°/28°	Nashville	55°/33°	62°/34°
Houston	79°/63°	77°/66°	New York	36°/23°	39°/27°
Indianapolis	42°/25°	48°/27°	San Francisco	61°/48°	59°/48°
Kansas City	60°/32°	65°/44°	St. Louis	53°/30°	60°/33°
Knoxville	52°/30°	56°/28°	Washington D.C.	40°/26°	42°/26°

### UV INDEX

The higher the UV Index number, the greater the need for skin protection.

0-2 LOW | 3-5 MODERATE | 6-7 HIGH | 8-10 VERY HIGH | 11+ EXTREME

0	2	3	2	0
8 a.m.	10 a.m.	Noon.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.

### LAKES & RIVERS

OHIO RIVER.....	FLOOD STAGE.....	STAGE.....	24 HR. (+/-)
CAIRO.....	40.....	10.4.....	+1.9.....
GOLCONDA.....	40.....	30.3.....	+0.3.....
PADUCAH.....	39.....	15.5.....	-0.5.....
SMITHLAND.....	40.....	13.0.....	+0.2.....
UPPER STAGE... NORMAL.....	TEMP.....		
LAKE BARKLEY.....	355.0.....	354.0.....	42°.....
KENTUCKY LAKE.....	354.8.....	354.0.....	42°.....

8 a.m.	10 a.m.	Noon.	2 p.m.	4 p.m.
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### LOCAL WEATHER AUTHORITY

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