

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 146

BY SENATOR FESI

OFFICIAL JOURNALS. Provides relative to the official journal of parishes, municipalities, school boards, and other political subdivisions. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 43:141(A), 141.1, 143, 143.1(B)(1), and 144 and to enact R.S.
3 43:140(6) and 171(D), relative to the official journal of parishes, municipalities,
4 school boards, and other political subdivisions; to provide relative to authorization
5 of the designation of a website as an alternative to a newspaper for use as the official
6 journal; to provide for terms and definitions; to provide relative to qualifications and
7 requirements for the designated websites; to provide relative to publication on the
8 websites; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 43:141(A), 141, 143, 143.1(B)(1), and 144 are hereby amended and
11 reenacted and R.S. 43:140(6) and 171(D) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §140. Definitions

13 As used in this Chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed
14 to them in this Section:

15 * * *

16 **(6) "Website" shall mean a Uniform Resource Locator ("URL"), or**
17 **unique online web address, used to locate and access resources on the internet,**

1 which complies with the requirement of R.S. 43:141.1(A) and meets all of the
2 following requirements:

3 (a) Is the primary internet website owned or operated by or on behalf of
4 the governing body choosing to designate a website as its official journal.

5 (b) Is publicly accessible at no cost to users and without requiring
6 registration or login.

7 (c) Includes a dedicated section for legal notices, advertisements,
8 proclamations, minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets and other official
9 proceedings, clearly labeled and easily navigable from the homepage.

10 (d) Maintains an archive of all published notices for at least one year
11 from the date of posting, with searchable functionality by date, keyword, and
12 type of notice.

13 (e) Ensures that notices are posted in a timely manner as required by law
14 and remain unaltered once posted, except for corrections clearly noted.

15 (f) Complies with accessibility standards under the Americans with
16 Disabilities Act and provide a mechanism for users to request alterative
17 formats.

18 (g) Identifies a person, and that person's contact information,
19 responsible for receiving and publishing information required by law to be
20 published in the official journal.

21 §141. Official journal to be selected by police juries, city and parish councils,
22 municipal corporations, and school boards

23 A. The police juries, city and parish councils, municipal corporations, and
24 school boards in all the parishes, the parish of Orleans excepted, at their first meeting
25 in June of each year, shall select a newspaper or designate a website as official
26 journal for their respective parishes, towns, or cities for a term of one year.

27 * * *

28 §141.1. Requirement for website when newspaper is the official journal

29 A. Every official journal which is a newspaper selected pursuant to this Part

1 shall have a website and shall post all official proceedings and public notices that it
2 publishes on that website and on a collective website in which a majority of the
3 state's official journals participate.

4 * * *

5 §143. Newspaper **or designated website** selected to be known as official journal;
6 duties

7 The newspaper **or designated website** selected shall be known as the official
8 journal of the parish, town, city or school board, and it shall publish all minutes,
9 ordinances, resolutions, budgets and other official proceedings of the police jury,
10 town or city councils, or the school board.

11 §143.1. Publications; errors and omissions; billing; retention period

12 * * *

13 B.(1) An official journal **which is a newspaper** that publishes official
14 proceedings and public notices shall, within thirty days after such a publication,
15 submit a bill for the publication with a copy of the original published proceeding or
16 notice and a verified statement that does both of the following:

17 (a) States the rate charged to the political subdivision for the publication.

18 (b) Certifies the number and dates of publication.

19 * * *

20 §144. Penalty for failure to have proceedings published

21 A. The official of any municipal corporation, police jury, or school board by
22 law responsible for the preparing and recording of the official proceedings who,
23 within twenty days from the date of any meeting at which the official proceedings
24 were had, ~~wilfully~~ **willfully** neglects or fails to furnish the official journal with a
25 copy of the minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets, and proceedings for
26 publication, shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than five
27 hundred dollars, or be imprisoned for not less than ten days nor more than six
28 months, or both.

29 **B. The person identified, in accordance with R.S. 43:140(6)(g), as**

- (3) Includes a dedicated section for legal notices, advertisements, proclamations, minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets and other official proceedings, clearly labeled and easily navigable from the homepage.
- (4) Maintains an archive of all published notices for at least one year from the date of posting, with searchable functionality by date, keyword, and type of notice.
- (5) Ensures that notices are posted in a timely manner as required by law and remain unaltered once posted, except for corrections clearly noted.
- (6) Complies with accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide a mechanism for users to request alternative formats.
- (7) Identifies a person, and that person's contact information, responsible for receiving and publishing information required by law to be published in the official journal.

Present law provides that the police juries, city and parish councils, municipal corporations, and school boards in all the parishes, the parish of Orleans excepted, at the first meeting in June of each year, shall select a newspaper as the official journal for their respective parishes, towns, or cities for a term of one year.

Proposed law retains present law and adds that a website may be designated as an official journal.

Present law provides that every official journal selected pursuant to present law shall have a website and shall post all official proceedings and public notices that it publishes on that website and on a collective website in which a majority of the state's official journals participate.

Proposed law retains present law but specifies that this requirement only applies to newspapers.

Present law provides that the newspaper selected shall be known as the official journal of the parish, town, city or school board, and it shall publish all minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets and other official proceedings of the police jury, town or city councils, or the school board.

Proposed law retains present law but adds websites as qualifying official journals.

Present law provides that an official journal that publishes official proceedings and public notices shall, within 30 days after such a publication, submit a bill for the publication with a copy of the original published proceeding or notice and a verified statement that does both of the following:

- (1) States the rate charged to the political subdivision for the publication.
- (2) Certifies the number and dates of publication.

Proposed law retains present law but adds newspapers.

Present law provides that the official of any municipal corporation, police jury, or school board by law responsible for the preparing and recording of the official proceedings who, within 20 days from the date of any meeting at which the official proceedings were had, wilfully neglects or fails to furnish the official journal with a copy of the minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets, and proceedings for publication, shall be fined not less than \$25 nor more than \$500, or be imprisoned for not less than 10 days nor more than six months, or both.

Proposed law retains present law.

Proposed law provides that the person identified, in accordance with present law (R.S. 43:140(6)(g)), as responsible for publishing of the official proceedings of any municipal corporation, police jury, or school board, who, within 20 days from receipt of any request to publish official proceedings, willfully neglects or fails to publish a copy of the minutes, ordinances, resolutions, budgets, and proceedings on the governing body's website, shall be fined not less than \$25 nor more than \$500, or be imprisoned for not less than 10 days nor more than six months, or both.

Proposed law provides that notwithstanding any provision of proposed law, a levee, drainage, subdrainage, road, subroad, navigation, and sewerage districts, or other political subdivisions of state and parishes, may designate a website as defined in present law (R.S. 43:140(6)) as its official journal, in the same manner and under the same provisions as required by present law (R.S. 43:141, et seq).

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 43:141(A), 141.1, 143, 143.1(B)(1), and 144; adds R.S. 43:140(6) and 171(D))