

Massachusetts House of Representatives
Bill Summary

Bill #: H.5512

Title: An Act allowing print-free digital legal notices in the town of Shrewsbury

Sponsor: Rep. Hannah Kane and Sen. Michael Moore

Committee: Municipalities and Regional Government

Hearing Date: July 22, 2026

Similar bills: H.2321 (Watertown) and H.5486 (Wayland) and 8 other bills.

Current Law: MGL Chapter 4, Section 13 (b) states, in part, that If a person, corporation, state agency, including its political subdivisions, a state authority, including its political subdivisions, municipality, including its political subdivisions, or other legal entity is required by a statute, ordinance, by-law or judicial order to publish a legal notice in a newspaper or newspaper of general circulation, the person, corporation, agency, authority, municipality or other legal entity shall publish said notice in a newspaper which shall ensure that the legal notice appears in: (i) a newspaper's print publication; (ii) on the newspaper's website; and (iii) on a statewide website that may be maintained as a repository for such notices.

Summary: Section 1 of the bill exempts the town of Shrewsbury from any contrary provisions contained in subsection (b) of Section 13 of MGL Chapter 4, providing that whenever the town of Shrewsbury, the Shrewsbury public schools, or any of their subdivisions, committees, boards, commissions, bodies or officers are required by law, ordinance, by-law, regulation or judicial order to publish a legal notice in a newspaper, such a requirement may be satisfied by using one or more of the following methods:

- (i) publishing in a newspaper of general print circulation;
- (ii) on a newspaper's website;
- (iii) on websites that report local news and opinion that satisfy all criteria for digital publication as enumerated in Section 13(b) of Chapter 4;
- (iv) on a website maintained as a statewide repository for such notices; or
- (v) a town-wide website that may be maintained as a repository for notices.

Section 2 contains a provision stating that nothing in the act shall be construed to alter or amend the timing requirements for publishing legal notices as provided for in state law.

Section 3 provides for this special act to take effect upon its passage.

Notes: Language approved ("Voted") as Article 31 at the May 18, 2026 Shrewsbury Annual Town Meeting.