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To: Sen. Julia Lynn, chair, and members of the Senate Committee on Commerce

From: Rick Nichols, editor, The Oskaloosa Independent

Re: Testimony against House Bill 2454

Sen. Lynn and members of the Committee:

Whether the effort originates within the private sector (e.g., self-storage businesses) or the public sector (e.g., the City of Oskaloosa), I basically view all efforts to give businesses and governmental entities the option to place public notices online and only online or "in any other commercially reasonable manner" as moving away from transparency and toward secrecy at some level. Please give me a break! How many people do you know of who actually get up in the morning and say to themselves, "I need to get online as soon as possible and start looking for public notices so I don't miss out on any hearings today or any good buys down at Storage City."

This bill? It's a "good buy" alright, a good-bye to a system that has been working just fine for a number of years now - remember what the old-timers used to say, "It ain't broke, don't fix it." - and it's a good-bye to transparency and the reasonable checks and balances that need to be in place if the consumer (or in this case the renter) is to have much of a chance in his or her dealings with the owner/operator of the business.

I like football as much as the next guy and I sure like it when the Chiefs are able to call an end run play and the runner is able to get to the edge and go 38 yards for a touchdown to put the game away. But I don't really care for legislative end runs that basically amount to nothing more than an attempt to circumvent the spirit of the law by letting a business or a governmental entity bypass newspapers as a means by which to get the word out about something when people have a legitimate need to know about that something, be it a budget hearing or the planned sale of someone's personal property.

In short, at the very least, this bill needs to be put in "a cool dry place" for a while to borrow from the lyrics of a Traveling Wilburys song, or better yet, taken out to the nearest dump and buried for good.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Nichols



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