

# NO ONE SAYS IT BETTER

**The Berlin Chamber of Commerce**

40 Chamberlain Hwy.  
Kensington, CT 06037  
860-829-1033 -- fax: 829-1243

February 25, 2010

Senator Donald J. DeFronzo  
D-6

Dear Don,

This Chamber of Commerce, which represents businesses in Berlin, Kensington and East Berlin, is concerned about the pending legislation which will remove public notices from newspapers and put them on municipality websites.

The economic viability of our local newspaper, which has supported us and all our members in a variety of ways for many years, is at stake.

This fact combined with the loss of transparency and accessibility is troubling. We don't believe that government can police itself. Putting public notices into the hands of those that can directly benefit them can lead to conflicting roles. A number of our communities, as you know, have recently been unwilling participants in corruption cases. We don't need more.

If online access is part of the goal we know that all Connecticut newspapers have a common website named [ctpublicnotices.org](http://ctpublicnotices.org) where all public notices that appear in print are also placed.

We know many of our members in the construction trades use public notices to bid on projects. It is much easier and more convenient for them to get these notices in their newspaper than anywhere else. Internet access is limited for them.

We urge you to vote against this legislation.

Respectfully,

Katherine A. Fuechsel  
Executive Director

## PUBLIC NOTICES MUST REMAIN PUBLIC

### KEEP PUBLIC NOTICES IN YOUR NEWSPAPER!

Pending legislation may remove your right to read public notices in newspapers, moving them from the public domain to the internet. We're concerned. And you should be, too.

Public notices are an important tool in assuring an informed citizenry. They have helped develop America into a participatory democracy for hundreds of years and where it counts the most: how your tax dollars are spent, how policy is made and how our futures are charted.

They are located in easy-to-find sections of your newspaper. And they are fully accessible to everyone - unlike the internet, which is not accessible to everyone.

Less than 10% of the U.S. population views a local, state or federal government website daily, according to the May 2009 release of U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Estimates of Resident Population.

This means more than nine out of ten people may never see a given notice.

This compares dramatically to the fact that 83% of adults read a community newspaper every week, according to the

National Newspaper Association.

Furthermore, a public notice printed in the newspaper produces a permanent record. The internet does not, nor does it assure timeliness. And a newspaper is archived for years; not subject to computer crashes and hackers.

Newspapers are easily verifiable, fully transparent and represent a secure third party who has nothing to gain from any notice. Connecticut's recent ethical lapses shed a glaring light on the full meaning of this problem. It's like putting the fox in charge of the hen house.

Every public notice, which runs in a

Connecticut daily newspaper, is automatically uploaded to that newspaper's web site and [CTPublicNotices.org](http://CTPublicNotices.org).

Newspapers are your watchdogs. Don't let that role be changed now. Voice your opinion.

**To keep your notices in the newspaper, contact your local elected officials or:**

**Governor Jodi Rell - 860.566.4840**

**Senate Democrats - 860.240.8600**

**House Democrats - 860.240.8500**

**Senate Republicans - 860.240.8800**

**House Republicans - 860.240.8700**

**CDNA** Connecticut Daily Newspapers' Association  
Since 1904

Visit [www.ctdailynews.com](http://www.ctdailynews.com) to contact your legislator today

CT LETTER 5A