

January 26, 2017

Re: Newspaper Legal Advertising Cost Survey Sample Generated by the League of Municipalities

Dear Mayor:

The League of Municipalities serves as the trusted voice of all 565 municipalities to the Administration, State Legislature, Courts, and media and through them to the public. For more than 100 years the League has served as repository of information about and for municipal government. Trust in the information and statements provided by the League are a cornerstone of its ability to serve municipal government well.

As public discourse continues over pending legislation that could impact municipal requirements to use printed legal advertising notices, we want to clarify public misrepresentations of survey sample data that was collected by the League, while at the same time attributing that data to the League. In our view the survey sample collected by the League does not shed useful information on this issue.

We must make our caveat on this survey sample absolutely clear.

The League itself did not publish this survey sample because we knew it was not statistically reliable and could not reasonably be used to draw conclusions applicable to many municipalities. The League released the survey sample to the Governor's office and the media when they requested it from us with the explanation that it should not be used to extrapolate beyond that small sample. Anyone who checked with us regarding the survey information was similarly cautioned about it.

The media accurately reported this caveat December 15, 2016 on Philly.com http://www.philly.com/philly/news/new_jersey/20161215_A_battle_over_how_to_inform_the_public_Newspapers_or_government_websites.html?mobi=true

It's unclear exactly how much municipalities pay to publish notices. A survey recently conducted by the League found that 147 municipalities paid a total of \$1.05 million to publish notices in 2015. There are 565 municipalities in New Jersey.

"It's difficult, really, to extrapolate beyond that," Cerra said. He said the league conducted the survey because "the governor's office asked us, a few weeks ago. They wanted to verify that we supported the concept."

For these reasons the League continues to caution that the League survey sample data related to print legal advertising costs is not intended to, and should not be used to draw conclusions applicable statewide or even to the majority of municipalities.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Darcy, CAE
Executive Director

