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## Local Government Committee

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### HB 1818

**Brief Description:** Authorizing the publishing of legal or official notices within an online database.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hunter, Hudgins and Frockt.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Information Services (DIS) to establish an online database for county legal and official notices.
- Allows counties to publish legal and official notices on the legal notice database maintained by the DIS, subject to certain requirements.

**Hearing Date:** 2/16/11

**Staff:** Miranda Leskinen (786-7291) and Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

#### **Background:**

##### County Legal Notice Publication.

County legal notices and delinquent tax lists must be published in the county's officially-designated newspaper. The county legislative authority annually lets a one-year contract to a qualified legal newspaper to serve as the official county newspaper.

If more than one legal newspaper in the county is qualified for the contract, the legislative authority must advertise the contract opportunity and accept bid proposals at least five weeks prior to letting the contract to the most appropriate bidder. In contrast, if no legal newspaper is published in the county, the legislative authority must contract with a legal newspaper in an adjacent county that has general circulation within the contracting county's jurisdiction.

Required legal notices that are to be published weekly in a newspaper for a specified number of weeks must be published on the newspaper's standard publication day each week.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Department of Information Services.

The Department of Information Services (DIS), which has cabinet-level status, offers a wide range of products and services to schools, state agencies, counties, cities, and tribal governments. The DIS also provides staff to the state's Information Services Board and oversees state government IT policies and strategic plans. The primary role of the DIS is to help state and local governments use technology to more efficiently serve Washington residents.

**Summary of Bill:**

County Legal Notice Publication.

A county may choose, through the adoption of an annual ordinance, to publish its legal or official notices on an online database. The DIS is required to establish and maintain this online database, called the legal notice database, for the purpose of publishing required county legal and official notices. The DIS may begin accepting these notices for publication on the legal notice database 60 days after the database is created and must maintain required metadata records as proof of publication for each electronically-published notice. The database is funded proportionate to use by all the counties that publish notices on the database. The public must be able to view the database no less than 98 percent of the time and on a continuous basis.

Counties that choose to publish their legal or official notices on the database are subject to the same content and time frame requirements as counties that publish their notices in newspapers. Additionally, counties publishing their legal or official notices online must provide a link to the legal notice database on their official website, along with a list of libraries providing free internet access within their jurisdiction. Furthermore, upon request, free copies of notices must be made available to individuals who cannot access the database.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.