

By Senator Rodrigues

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Public Notice and Voting Rights
3 Restoration Database; authorizing legal notifications
4 in certain cases to be published on a website
5 established by the Supreme Court, in lieu of newspaper
6 publication; providing that such legal notifications
7 be posted to the website following payment of a fee;
8 providing limitations for, and for the adjustment of,
9 such fees; specifying that website publication
10 constitutes proof of publication, unless otherwise
11 determined by a court; authorizing a county to publish
12 such legal notifications in a newspaper, subject to
13 certain limitations; providing requirements and
14 limitations regarding the operation of the website;
15 providing that certain revenue be used toward certain
16 data collection regarding nonviolent felons and the
17 publication of such data on a website; providing
18 requirements and limitations regarding the operation
19 of the website containing such data; providing for the
20 deposit of any remaining excess revenue into the State
21 Courts Revenue Trust Fund; specifying that a certain
22 portion of remaining excess revenue may be pledged
23 toward operating costs of the website containing legal
24 notifications; providing an effective date.

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26 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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28 Section 1. Public Notice and Voting Rights Restoration
29 Database.—

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30 (1) Notwithstanding any other law, in any civil or criminal
31 case in which a legal notification must be made by publication
32 in a newspaper, the notification may be published on a website
33 established by the Supreme Court in lieu of newspaper
34 publication. The notification must be posted to the website
35 following the payment of a fee established by the Supreme Court.
36 The fee charged may vary based on the number of words contained
37 in the notification but may not exceed \$500 per notification.
38 The maximum fee may be adjusted by the Supreme Court, upon
39 approval by the Legislative Budget Commission. Actual access by
40 the court of a notification on the Internet constitutes proof of
41 publication for all purposes, unless the court with jurisdiction
42 over the particular matter determines that access to the website
43 was not sufficiently available during the notice period to
44 constitute sufficient notice. A county may publish the legal
45 notification in at least one newspaper of general circulation in
46 such county in lieu of website publication; however, the fee
47 charged by the newspaper for publication may not exceed the
48 website publication fee established by the Supreme Court.

49 (2) The website established pursuant to subsection (1) must
50 be operated by the Supreme Court, by the Office of the State
51 Courts Administrator, or by a contractor selected by the court.
52 The website operating costs may not exceed 15 percent of revenue
53 from fees for legal notifications published on the website. The
54 Office of the State Courts Administrator must publicize the
55 existence of the website and its web address on at least a
56 monthly basis through publishing a notice in at least one
57 newspaper of general circulation in each county of the state,
58 directing each county to post a clear written notice at the

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59 entrance of each county courthouse and each annex containing
60 court facilities, and directing each clerk of court and judicial
61 circuit to include a notice on their official website.

62 (3) All revenue from fees collected pursuant to subsection
63 (1) which is in excess of the operating costs for the legal
64 notification website must be used toward aggregating and
65 publishing data regarding restitution, fines and fees owed by
66 nonviolent felons to victims and the judicial branch, and the
67 operation of a website that displays such data. Such website
68 must be operated by the Supreme Court, by the Office of the
69 State Courts Administrator, or by a contractor selected by the
70 court; however, the operating costs of the website may not
71 exceed 50 percent of excess revenue remaining after any
72 deductions made pursuant to subsection (2).

73 (4) Any excess revenue remaining after deducting operating
74 costs for the website established in subsection (3) shall be
75 deposited into the State Courts Revenue Trust Fund. Fifteen
76 percent of such excess revenue from fees collected in any fiscal
77 year may be pledged for the operation of the website established
78 in subsection (1).

79 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.