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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 5011**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE COPYING OF PUBLIC RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill reduces or eliminates fees for copying public records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as follows:

1. reduces the maximum fee public agencies (see BACKGROUND) may charge to \$0.15 per page, excluding land records, which may be charged up to \$1 per agency-copied page (under current law, state governmental entities may charge up to \$0.25 per page and other public agencies may charge up to \$0.50 per page);
2. reduces the fee that public agencies can charge for additional certified pages from \$0.50 to \$0.15 (the \$1.00 fee for the first certified page remains unchanged); and
3. prohibits public agencies from charging individuals a fee for copying public records, excluding land records, using a handheld scanner (e.g., mobile phone or camera).

Currently, public agencies may establish their own fee structure, up to a maximum of \$20 for each time an individual copies public records at the agency using a handheld scanner. For land records, the bill maintains public agencies' ability to charge these individuals up to \$20 per day. FOIA currently defines "handheld scanner" as a battery-operated electronic scanning device that (1) leaves no mark or impression on the public record and (2) does not unreasonably interfere with the public agency's operation.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

**BACKGROUND**

***Public Agency***

Generally, under FOIA, a public agency is any (1) state, municipal, regional, or quasi-public agency or (2) entity that is the functional equivalent of these agencies (CGS § 1-200(1)).

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18    Nay 0    (03/29/2021)