
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5879

AN ACT EXEMPTING CERTAIN CONTACT INFORMATION FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

SUMMARY

This bill adds to the list of documents that are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Specifically, it exempts any portion of a contact information list containing an individual's residential or mailing address, email address, or phone number, if the list is (1) created or modified by a legislator or his or her staff for the legislator's public office purposes and (2) in the legislator's or staff person's custody or control.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2021

BACKGROUND

Related Rulings

In Declaratory Ruling # 90 (1998), the Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC) ruled that, generally, correspondence between legislators and constituents is (1) not disclosable under FOIA if it relates to casework (e.g., a request to assist the constituent with a matter involving a state agency) but (2) disclosable under FOIA if it relates to enacting legislation.

In 2014, FOIC ruled in two contested cases that constituents' town and zip code information was disclosable when contacting a legislator about a bill because, among other things, the information demonstrated that a person was a constituent and was generally widely available. On the other hand, the commission ruled that constituents' email addresses were not disclosable because, among other things, the information did not demonstrate whether a person was a constituent and was not widely available (FIC2013-0183 and FIC2013-0194).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/31/2021)