

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1157

AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Title: ACT CONCERNING EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC AGENCIES.

Vote Date: 3/24/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/6/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would expand the list of state employees who's addresses are exempt from FOIA to include: A judicial marshal employed by the judicial branch; An employee of the disability determination services unit within the Department of Aging and Disability Services; An employee of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services within the Department of Aging and Disability Services; and An employee of the Office of the Attorney General. As well as notify people who are included in a mass request. This bill was amended to no longer include judicial marshals.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

William Tong, Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General expressed his support for the bill. He detailed the long list of harassment and threats his staff have faced in the last year alone.

External Affairs Division, State of Connecticut Judicial Branch noted that the judicial marshals are already exempt from FOIA so adding them to this bill is redundant.

Colleen Murphy, Executive Director, FOI Commission expressed her opposition to adding further limitations to FOIA. She also noted that the changes made to the notification process are redundant since the process is already mostly the same unless the information to be disclosed is not considered an invasion of privacy.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Travis Woodward, President, CSEA SEIU Local 2001 expressed his support for the bill, he explained that the employees listed have all faced threats, harassment, and intimidation while serving the state. He also explained that notification for mass reports does not block reporting and therefore should not create issues.

The following people have submitted support for similar reasons as above and the Attorney General as well as sharing their own anecdotes:

Local 1199NE
Joan Andrews
Pam Armstrong
Robert Perez
Stephanie Smith
Gloshyla Cromartie
Latarsha Johnson
Raul Rodriguez
Robin Schwartz
Steven Storm

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Tom Scheffey, Vice President, CCFOI explained that any limitation to FOIA is bad for citizens. He gave a specific example of a state employee who was hired to a municipal office while still owing taxes in their former municipality. He also explained that when an employee is arrested their address is important information.

The following people have submitted opposition for similar reasons as above

Linda Dalessio
Dan Marcil
Jeffery Daniels

Reported by: Jonathan Lukasiewicz

Date: 3/24/2023