



February 24, 2016

[CS/CS/CS/SB 1220](#) (Garcia) dealing with Attorney Fees in Public Record Cases will be voted on by the full Senate the week of March 1.

We encourage you to continue to ask Senators to Support CS/CS/CS/SB 1220, but we really need your help with the companion bill in the House.

[HB 1021](#) (Steube) was not heard in its last committee of reference, and unless the bill is withdrawn from the committee, it will die along with any hope of passing Public Records Reform in 2016.

Protecting the public treasury by stopping predatory public records requests is a priority for the Florida League of Cities and your City. Please ask your Representative to contact Speaker Steve Crisafulli, the Speaker of the House, and urge him to withdraw HB 1021 from committee and hear the bill on the House Floor.

Please also ask your Representatives to Support HB 1021.

It is very important that House Members hear from you NOW on this important issue.

Sample Message to House Members:

The First Amendment Foundation and the Florida Press Association have agreed to the language in CS/CS/CS/SB 1220. Please urge Speaker Crisafulli to withdraw HB 1021 from its final committee and hear the bill on the House Floor. HB 1021, which will be amended to be identical to CS/CS/CS/SB 1220 if heard, is needed to clarify the public records law and create a separation between individuals who actually want public records and those who only want to harass the agency or obtain attorney fees.

This is a priority for my city – Please Support HB 1021!

Background

CS/CS/CS/SB 1220 was amended to provide that attorney fees shall be given when a public agency unlawfully refuses a request to inspect or copy a public record, as long as the requestor provides written notice of the request to the agency's custodian of public records at least 5 business days before filing the lawsuit. The bill requires a public agency to post the contact

information of the custodian of records in the agency's primary administrative office and on the agency's website, if the agency has a website. Importantly, the bill also provides that attorney fees may not be provided if the request to inspect or copy a public record was made primarily to harass the agency or cause a violation of the public records laws. The bill has been agreed to by the First Amendment Foundation and the Florida Press Association.

Attached is contact information for the full FL House of Representatives. You can also use the League's advocacy tool [Capitol Connection](#) to e-mail legislators.

Should you have any questions, please contact: Casey Cook at ccook@flcities.com or 850-228-8559 (cell).

Thank you for your advocacy efforts.