
**State Government & Tribal Affairs
Committee**

HB 2340

Brief Description: Clarifying restrictions on the use of the public records act for the purpose of obtaining records for commercial or profit-making purposes.

Sponsors: Representatives Moeller, Appleton, Armstrong, Ryu, Zeiger, Springer, Tharinger, Dammeier, Darneille and Hunt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts from disclosure under the Public Records Act *information about individuals or entities* requested for commercial purposes.
- Adds a public policy statement to the Public Records Act establishing that the provisions of the act are not intended to facilitate the gathering of information for purely commercial or profit-making purposes unrelated to the promotion of transparency and openness in the operation of state and local governments.

Hearing Date: 1/23/12

Staff: Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

Background:

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires that all state and local government agencies make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless they fall within certain statutory exemptions. The provisions requiring public records disclosure must be interpreted liberally, and the exemptions narrowly, in order to effectuate a general policy favoring disclosure.

Lists of information about individuals requested for commercial purposes may not be disclosed under the act. However, for a reasonable charge, such information consisting of either lists of

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applicants for professional licenses or lists of professional licensees may be disclosed to those professional associations or educational organizations recognized by their professional licensing or examination board.

Summary of Bill:

The act exempts from disclosure under the PRA *information about individuals or entities* requested for commercial purposes. This new exemption amends and broadens the current provision authorizing only the exemption of *lists of individuals* for commercial purposes.

Adds a public policy statement to the PRA establishing that the provisions of the act are not intended to facilitate the gathering of information for purely commercial or profit-making purposes unrelated to the promotion of transparency and openness in the operation of state and local governments.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.