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**State Government Committee**

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**HB 1845**

**Brief Description:** Exempting bank account, social security, and credit card numbers from public disclosure.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Newhouse, Schual-Berke, Benson, Kirby, Linville, Moeller, Chase, Bush, Upthegrove, Veloria, McIntire, Skinner, Mielke and Rockefeller.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Exempts federal social security numbers from public disclosure and copying except when disclosure is expressly required, governed, or authorized by other law.

**Hearing Date:** 2/28/03

**Staff:** Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

**Background:**

The open public records law was approved by state voters in 1972 as part of Initiative Measure No. 276. All public records of state agencies and local governments are open to public inspection and copying unless a law expressly excludes the public record from public inspection and copying. This disclosure requirement is liberally construed and any exception is narrowly constructed.

A person's right to privacy is invaded or violated only if disclosure of information about the person: (1) would be highly offensive to a reasonable person; and (2) is not of legitimate concern to the public. Beyond that, only those records expressly identified are considered exempt from disclosure.

Many exemptions to the law currently exist, including:

- personal information on students in public schools, patients or clients of public institutions or public health agencies, or welfare recipients;
- information revealing the identity of persons who are witnesses to or victims of crime;
- test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used to administer a licence, employment, or academic examination;

- financial and valuable trade information; and
- credit card numbers, debit card numbers, electronic check numbers, card expiration dates, or bank or other financial account numbers supplied to an agency for the purpose of electronic transfer of funds.

**Summary of Bill:**

Credit card numbers, debit card numbers, electronic check numbers, card expiration dates, or bank or other financial account numbers when supplied to an agency for the purpose of electronic transfer of funds is exempt from public disclosure. The exemption is broadened by: 1) deleting the limitation "when supplied to an agency for the purpose of electronic transfer of funds;" and 2) adding federal social security numbers. Exceptions for disclosure are limited only as expressly required by or governed by other law, or when a request for a document, including a federal social security number, is made by a credit bureau or financial institution and disclosure is authorized by other law.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

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