

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5635

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Health Care

**Title:** An act relating to health profession disciplinary authority written communications.

**Brief Description:** Modifying procedures regarding disclosure of address of a health professional subject to a disciplinary complaint.

**Sponsors:** Senators Niemi and Talmadge.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Health Care, April 1, 1993, DPA.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Dellwo, Chair; L. Johnson, Vice Chair; Dyer, Ranking Minority Member; Ballasiotes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appelwick; Conway; Cooke; R. Johnson; Lisk; Mastin; Mielke; Morris; Thibaudeau; and Veloria.

**Staff:** John Welsh (786-7133).

**Background:** Individuals seeking or renewing a health professional credential must provide the Department of Health with a mailing address. The application and renewal forms used in collecting this information are considered public documents and subject to public inspection and copying. Many health care professionals may be unaware that this information is available to the public.

When a person files a complaint against a credential holder, the disciplinary authority may communicate in writing with the person about the status or disposition of the complaint. Some of these communications have included the home address of the credential holder. There is concern that disclosure of such information makes it easier for a person filing a complaint to locate and harass a credential holder at his or her home.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** The Department of Health is prohibited from disclosing, to persons filing complaints against health providers regulated under the Uniform

Disciplinary Act, the residential address and residential telephone numbers of those providers, if the providers have furnished to the department an alternative or business address and telephone number. The department is required to inform providers of the disclosure provisions of this act.

The federal social security number of health providers cannot be disclosed for public inspection and copying except upon the request of federal, state and local governments, and licensing, credentialing, investigatory, disciplinary and examination organizations. The residential address and residential phone number of health providers regulated under the Uniform Disciplinary Act cannot be disclosed for public inspection and copying, if the provider requests it and furnishes to the department an alternative or business address and telephone number. After January 1, 1995, the residential address and telephone number of providers are automatically withheld from public inspection and copying, if the provider furnishes an alternative or business address and telephone number.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The federal social security number was made confidential in the Public Disclosure Act, except for governmental or disciplinary bodies requesting it. The disclosure of the residential address and telephone number of health providers was prohibited automatically after January 1, 1995, if the provider furnishes the department with an alternate business address and telephone number.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The department unwittingly has furnished complainants with the home addresses and phone numbers of health providers against whom complaints have been filed. As a result, these providers have been harassed at home by angry clients who disrupt their domestic tranquility. Such information is personal and should remain confidential.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Susan B. Moores and Michael J. Barsanti, WATSA (pro).