

Government Oversight Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6882

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION FOR REVISIONS TO THE FREEDOM OF

Title: INFORMATION ACT.

Vote Date: 2/25/2025

Vote Action: JOINT FAVORABLE

PH Date: 2/13/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Oversight Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill will implement recommendations of the FOIC that makes conforming changes in the FOIA statute, makes grammatical updates, clarifies appeals regarding denials of records requests, defines "handheld scanners" to include mobile phones, cameras, or any other portable devices capable of capturing an image of a public record. Defines "government function" regarding the administration or management of a program of a public agency, and updates outdated, non-technical processes. It would modernize some of the outdated language that will allow for technical integrations in the FOIA process request. Secs 7-11 make technical and conforming changes. Sec 8 clarifies that certain written notices for meetings of public agencies can be delivered electronically or by mail.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Colleen Murphy, Executive Director: Freedom of Information Commission:

Supports the bill because it updates language compartmentalizing the administration of FOI training and requests. It also improves administration of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) matters, specifically by preventing access to said records. Th FOIC supports expanding the definition of hand-held scanner to include "a mobile telephone, camera or any other portable device capable of capturing an image of a public record." And allowing for electronic transmission of special meeting notices to members of a public agency.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Mark Bernacki, New Britain Town & City Clerk, Co-Chair CT Town Clerks Association:

Antoinette Spinelli, Waterbury Town Clerk, Co-Chair CT Town Clerks Association:

Supports the bill as it enables the organization of town clerks across CT to fulfil their mission of providing transparency among public records and will help to modernize all processes regarding accessing public records and supports the clarification that broadens the types of electronic devices that may be used to capture an image of the document.

Michelle Jacklin, Co-President CT Council on Freedom of Information:

Supports the bill because it clarifies existing statute which can be irrelevant to the mission of the FOIC, and modernize many processes overseen by the organization, by expanding the definition of hand-held scanner to include mobile phones and cameras. She is also supportive of allowing public agencies to send special meeting notices to members electronically rather than delivering them in person.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Griffin Olshan, Tom Atwood

Date: 2/27/2025