
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1209

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DISCLOSURE OF THE RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DISCLOSURE EXEMPTIONS UNDER SAID ACT.

SUMMARY

This bill adds teachers employed by a local or regional board of education (BOEs) to the list of individuals covered by the Freedom of Information Act's (FOIA) limitation on disclosing home addresses (see BACKGROUND). In doing so, it prohibits a BOE from disclosing, under FOIA, a teacher's home address from the BOE's personnel, medical, or similar files. It also allows the teachers to request address confidentiality from other public agencies (and from their BOE with respect to records besides those described above). To do so, the teacher must follow existing law's procedures for other covered individuals, including by submitting to the agency a written request with his or her business address.

Additionally, the bill establishes a task force to study FOIA's current exemption from disclosing the home addresses of certain public employees. The task force must consider whether the exemption should be expanded to include additional employees and submit a report with its findings and recommendations to the Government Oversight Committee by February 1, 2026. The task force ends on that date or when it submits the report, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, except that provisions establishing the task force are effective upon passage.

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Under the bill, the task force has the following six ex officio members, or their designees: the Freedom of Information Commission's executive

director, the attorney general, the secretary of the state, the administrative services commissioner, the emergency services and public protection commissioner, and the chief court administrator. The task force also includes the eight appointed members shown in the table below.

Table: Appointed Task Force Members

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Number of Appointments</i>	<i>Required Qualifications</i>
House Speaker	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents registrars of voters• Represents town clerks
Senate president pro tempore	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents educators• Unspecified
House majority leader	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents journalists
Senate majority leader	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents an organization that supports efforts to protect civil liberties
House minority leader	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents municipalities
Senate minority leader	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Represents an organization interested in issues related to FOIA

Under the bill, all initial appointments must be made by August 1, 2025, and the appointed task force members may be legislators. Appointing authorities must fill any vacancies. The House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must pick the task force’s chairpersons from among its members. The chairpersons must schedule and hold the first meeting by October 1, 2025. The Government Oversight Committee’s administrative staff must serve as the task force’s administrative staff.

BACKGROUND

Covered Individuals

Under existing law, the following public officials and employees, among others, are covered by FOIA’s home address disclosure limitation:

1. Connecticut judges and family support magistrates, judicial branch employees, prosecutors, public defenders, public defender social workers, and Division of Criminal Justice

inspectors;

2. Firefighters, state marshals, and police officers;
3. Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services employees who provide direct patient care, and employees of the departments of Correction and Children and Families; and
4. members and employees of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Requests for Home Address Confidentiality

Under existing law, unchanged by the bill, an agency that receives a FOIA request about a covered individual who requested address confidentiality must redact the person's home address only from records provided in response to a request that specifically names him or her. Additionally, the agency must make reasonable efforts to redact the person's address from (1) an existing list derived from a readily accessible electronic database and (2) any list that the agency voluntarily creates in response to a disclosure request. The law permits disclosure of a covered individual's residential address in any other type of record (other than in their employer's personnel, medical, or similar files, as described above). The disclosure prohibition also does not apply to a teacher's home address in (1) documents eligible to be recorded in municipal land records; (2) any list required by the state's election laws (e.g., voter registry lists, petition forms, and logs of absentee ballot applications); or (3) municipal grand lists.

Related Bills

SB 1226 (File 125), favorably reported by the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee, generally exempts from disclosure under FOIA records maintained or kept by or for public higher education institution faculty or staff arising out of teaching or research on medical, artistic, scientific, legal, or other scholarly issues.

SB 1233 (File 131), favorably reported by the GAE Committee, generally exempts from disclosure under FOIA the name and address of the person reporting an incident involving alleged bigotry or bias,

and the alleged offender, in reports to law enforcement or a database for reporting these allegations established by UConn's Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy.

SB 1433 (File 296), favorably reported by the GAE Committee, (1) adds Office of the Attorney General employees to the list of individuals covered by FOIA's limitation on disclosing home addresses and (2) extends to them provisions in existing law that allow covered individuals to also request home address confidentiality for other types of records.

HB 6883 (File 82), favorably reported by the Government Oversight Committee, (1) exempts any information indicating the location of a shelter or transitional housing for sexual assault victims from disclosure required under FOIA and (2) requires a public agency meeting's discussion about them to be held in executive session if it would reveal the shelter's or housing's location.

HB 6850 (File 146), favorably reported by the GAE Committee, generally (1) expands FOIA's limitation on disclosing a home address in an agency's personnel, medical, or similar files to generally cover all of the agency's employees, rather than just specified groups of employees and individuals (e.g., certain judges and police officers); and (2) extends to all public agency employees provisions in existing law that allow covered individuals to also request home address confidentiality for other types of records.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Oversight Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 8 Nay 4 (03/18/2025)