

Committee on Transportation

CS/CS/CS/HB 865 — Public Records/Motor Vehicle Crash Reports

by Economic Affairs Committee; Government Operations Subcommittee; Transportation and Highway Safety Subcommittee; and Rep. Kerner, Campbell, and others (CS/SB 1046 by Rules Committee and Senator Galvano)

Current law provides crash reports containing the identity and contact information of parties involved in a crash are confidential and exempt from public inspection and copying for 60 days. Certain free newspapers are an exception to this law, and they may have access to confidential and exempt information contained in crash reports before 60 days have elapsed.

The bill restricts the types of free newspapers which may have access to vehicle crash reports. In addition, the bill provides that if a newspaper requests 10 or more crash reports within a 24-hour period, the newspaper may not have access to the contact information of the parties involved in a crash.

The bill provides that a free newspaper may have access to crash reports if they:

- Have a distribution of least 7,500 copies by mail or carrier;
- Are intended to be generally distributed and circulated;
- Contain news of general interest; and
- Consist of a minimum of 10 pages per publication.

A free newspaper which requests 10 or more crash reports within 24 hours may not have access to the home, cellular, employment, or other telephone numbers or the home or employment address of any other the parties involved in the crash.

The bill provides this revised exception to the exemption that restricts access to certain information is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act and will stand repealed on October 2, 2019, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect on the same date that CS/HB 863 is adopted and becomes law, which is July 1, 2014.

Vote: Senate 33-0; House 109-8