

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Banking and Insurance

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BILL: SB 1320

INTRODUCER: Senator Richter

SUBJECT: Public Records/Office of Financial Regulation

DATE: March 24, 2014

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Billmeier	Knudson	BI	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2.			GO	
3.			RC	

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1320 creates a public records exemption for certain information held by the Office of Financial Regulation (OFR) relating to family trust companies, licensed family trust companies, and foreign licensed family trust companies. SB 1238 authorizes families to form and operate any of these three family trust companies, subject to regulatory requirements. A family trust company is an entity which provides trust services similar to those that can be provided by an individual or financial institution. This includes serving as a trustee of trusts held for the benefit of the family members as well as providing other fiduciary, investment advisory, wealth management, and administrative services to the family. A family trust company must be owned exclusively by family members and may not provide fiduciary services to the public.

This bill provides that the following records relating to family trust companies, licensed family trust companies, and foreign licensed family trust companies held by the OFR are confidential and exempt from public disclosure:

- All records relating to a registration, an application, or an annual certification of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- All records relating to an examination of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- Reports of examinations, operations, or conditions of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company, including working papers.
- Any portion of a list of names of the shareholders or members of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- Information received from a person from another state or nation or the Federal Government which is otherwise confidential or exempt pursuant to the laws of that state or nation or pursuant to federal law.

This bill creates a third degree felony for willfully disclosing information made confidential and exempt by this bill.

The bill provides for repeal of the exemption on October 2, 2019, unless reviewed and saved from repeal by the Legislature pursuant to the Open Government Sunset Review Act. As this bill creates a new public records exemption, the bill also provides a statement of public necessity as required by the State Constitution.

The bill provides that the act shall take effect on the same date that SB 1238 or similar legislation is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension thereof and becomes a law.

## II. Present Situation:

Article I, s. 24(a) of the Florida Constitution provides:

Every person has the right to inspect or copy any public record made or received in connection with the official business of any public body, officer, or employee of the state, or persons acting on their behalf, except with respect to records exempted pursuant to this section or specifically made confidential by this Constitution. This section specifically includes the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government and each agency or department created thereunder; counties, municipalities, and districts; and each constitutional officer, board, and commission, or entity created pursuant to law or this Constitution.

Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, specifies conditions under which public access must be provided to records of an agency. Section 119.07(1)(a), F.S., states:

Every person who has custody of a public record shall permit the record to be inspected and copied by any person desiring to do so, at any reasonable time, under reasonable conditions, and under supervision by the custodian of the public records.

Unless specifically exempted, all agency records are available for public inspection. The term “public record” is broadly defined to mean:

all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any agency.<sup>1</sup>

The Florida Supreme Court has interpreted this definition to encompass all materials made or received by an agency in connection with official business which are used to perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge.<sup>2</sup> All such materials are open for public inspection unless made exempt.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Section 119.011(12), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> *Shevin v. Byron, Harless, Schaffer, Reid and Associates, Inc.*, 379 So.2d 633, 640 (Fla. 1980).

<sup>3</sup> *Shevin v. Byron, Harless, Schaffer, Reid and Associates, Inc.*, 379 So.2d 633, 640 (Fla. 1980).

There is a difference between records that the Legislature has made exempt from public inspection and those that are *confidential* and exempt. If the Legislature makes a record confidential and exempt, such information may not be released by an agency to anyone other than to the persons or entities designated in the statute.<sup>4</sup> If a record is simply made exempt from disclosure requirements, an agency is not prohibited from disclosing the record in all circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

Exemptions must be created by general law, and such law must specifically state the public necessity justifying the exemption.<sup>6</sup> The exemption must be no broader than necessary to accomplish the stated purpose of the law.<sup>7</sup> A bill enacting an exemption may not contain other substantive provisions.<sup>8</sup>

### **Open Government Sunset Review Act**

The Open Government Sunset Review Act<sup>9</sup> provides for the systematic review, through a 5-year cycle ending October 2 of the fifth year following enactment, of an exemption from the Public Records Act or the Public Meetings Law. An exemption may be created, revised, or expanded only if it serves an identifiable public purpose and if the exemption is no broader than necessary to meet the public purpose it serves.<sup>10</sup>

### **Family Trust Companies**

SB 1238 authorizes families to form and operate family trust companies, licensed family trust companies, and foreign licensed family trust companies. At least 14 other states currently have statutes governing the organization and operation of family trust companies. Florida law does not expressly authorize families to establish their own family trust companies. In general, a family trust company is an entity which provides trust services similar to those that can be provided by an individual or financial institution such as a bank or public trust company. This includes serving as a trustee of trusts held for the benefit of the family members, as well as providing other fiduciary, investment advisory, wealth management, and administrative services to the family.<sup>11</sup>

## **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

**Section 1** of this bill, which is linked to the passage of SB 1238 or similar legislation, provides that the following records relating to family trust companies, licensed family trust companies, and foreign licensed family trust companies held by the OFR are confidential and exempt from public disclosure:

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<sup>4</sup> Florida Attorney General Opinion 85-62.

<sup>5</sup> *Williams v. City of Minneola*, 575 So. 2d 683, 687 (Fla. 5th DCA 1991), *review denied*, 589 So.2d 289 (Fla. 1991).

<sup>6</sup> See Fla. Const., art. I, s. 24(c).

<sup>7</sup> See Fla. Const., art. I, s. 24(c).

<sup>8</sup> See Fla. Const., art. I, s. 24(c).

<sup>9</sup> See s. 119.15, F.S.

<sup>10</sup> See s. 119.15(6)(b), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> See White Paper for SB 1238 by Senator Richter Relating to Family Trust Companies provided by the Real Property, Probate, and Trust Law Section of the Florida Bar (on file with the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance).

- All records relating to a registration, an application, or an annual certification of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- All records relating to an examination of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- Reports of examinations, operations, or conditions of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company, including working papers.
- Any portion of a list of names of the shareholders or members of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company.
- Information received from a person from another state or nation or the Federal Government which is otherwise confidential or exempt pursuant to the laws of that state or nation or pursuant to federal law.

This bill provides that the OFR may disclose information made confidential and exempt to:

- The authorized representative or representatives of the family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company under examination. The authorized representative or representatives shall be identified in a resolution or by written consent of the board of directors, if the trust company is a corporation, or of the managers, if the trust company is a limited liability company (LLC).
- A fidelity insurance company, upon written consent of the trust company's board of directors, if a corporation, or its managers, if a LLC.
- An independent auditor, upon written consent of the trust company's board of directors, if a corporation, or its managers, if a LLC.
- A liquidator, receiver, or conservator for a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company in the event of the appointment of the liquidator, receiver, or conservator. However, any portion of the information which discloses the identity of a bondholder, customer, family member, member, or stockholder must be redacted by the OFR before the release of such portion to the liquidator, receiver, or conservator.
- Any other state, federal, or foreign agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of family trust companies, licensed family trust companies, or foreign licensed family trust companies.
- A law enforcement agency in the furtherance of the agency's official duties and responsibilities.

This bill does not prevent or restrict the publication of a report required by federal law or the name of a family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company and the name and address of the registered agent of such a company.

This bill provides that a person who willfully discloses information made confidential and exempt by this bill commits third degree felony. A third degree felony is punishable by up to 5 years in prison.

This bill provides that the public records exemption created by it is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act and is repealed on October 2, 2019, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

**Section 2** of the bill amends s. 662.146, F.S., (which is created by SB 1238) to provide that books and records of any family trust company, licensed family trust company, or foreign licensed family trust company shall be available for inspection and examination as compelled by legislative subpoena.

**Section 3** of the bill amends s. 662.147, F.S., (which is created by HB 1267) to allow the OFR to release information otherwise made confidential by this bill to other state, federal, or foreign regulators of family trust companies or to report any suspected criminal activity to appropriate law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. This bill provides for the treatment of confidential information used in judicial or administrative proceedings, as well as confidential information that is compelled by legislative subpoena.

**Section 4** of this bill provides a public necessity statement.

**Section 5** of this bill provides that this bill is effective on the same date SB 1238, the substantive bill dealing with family trust companies, or similar legislation becomes effective.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

Article I, s. 24(c) of the Florida Constitution requires a bill creating a new public records exemption to pass by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting in each house of the Legislature. This bill requires a two-thirds vote.

Article I, s. 24(c) of the Florida Constitution requires a bill creating a new public records exemption to contain a public necessity statement justifying the exemption. This bill contains a public necessity statement.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

#### **V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

This bill would protect some information relating to practices of family-owned businesses of high net worth families.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The Office of Financial Regulation noted:

Lines 33-35 – Registration and application information submitted to state agencies is generally a public record unless a specific exemption applies (e.g. social security numbers, personal financial information such as account numbers). Language used in this portion of the bill appears to be vague and overbroad.

Lines 69-73 – Receivers and Liquidators are appointed to oversee the operations of an entity while it is in the process of winding up its affairs. Redaction of the information indicated would impede the ability of a receiver or liquidator to perform their duties and place an undue burden on OFR's resources to the extent redactions are required.<sup>12</sup>

The Department of Corrections estimates the impact of the new felony crime to be indeterminate but expects it to be insignificant.<sup>13</sup>

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

Lines 25, 96, and 180 should be amended to reflect SB 1238 as the linked bill.

Line 106 contains a statutory citation that does not exist in the linked bill. The citation should read s. 662.147, F.S.

Lines 124-138 address the confidentiality of information in administrative and court proceedings. Issues related to confidentiality of information in administrative proceedings should be addressed in the substantive bill. Issues relating to confidentiality of information in court proceedings are addressed in the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill creates section 662.148 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 662.146 and 662.147.

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<sup>12</sup> Office of Financial Regulation, SB 1320 Legislative Bill Analysis (March 14, 2014) at p. 5 (on file with the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance).

<sup>13</sup> Department of Corrections, SB 1320 Legislative Bill Analysis, (March 5, 2014) at p. 2 (on file with the Senate Committee on Banking and Insurance).

**IX. Additional Information:**

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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