

By the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability;
and Senator Burgess

585-03146-25

20251146c1

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to public records; amending s. 23.44,
F.S.; providing an exemption from public records
requirements for the personal identifying information
of a participant in the Hope Florida program contained
in records held by the Hope Florida Office or any
other agency designated to participate in the
administering the program; providing retroactive
application; providing for future legislative review
and repeal; providing a statement of public necessity;
providing a contingent effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (5) is added to section 23.44,
Florida Statutes, as created by SB 1144 or similar legislation,
2025 Regular Session, to read:

23.44 Hope Florida Office; eligibility to participate;
duties.—

(5) (a) A participant's personal identifying information
contained in records held by the office or any other agency
designated to participate in the administration of the program
before, on, or after the effective date of this exemption is
exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State
Constitution.

(b) This subsection is subject to the Open Government
Sunset Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand
repealed on October 2, 2030, unless reviewed and saved from
repeal by the Legislature.

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30 Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public
31 necessity to make the personal identifying information of Hope
32 Florida participants contained in records held by the Hope
33 Florida Office or any other agency that participates in the Hope
34 Florida program exempt from public records requirements. The
35 Hope Florida program collects personal identifying information
36 regarding program participants in order to fulfill its mission
37 to assist and serve Florida residents who are in vulnerable
38 situations and subject to abuse or exploitation. The Hope
39 Florida program collects information regarding its participants'
40 employment status, housing status, domestic situation, and
41 access to medical care and other basic needs. As such,
42 information provided would be personal, sensitive information
43 related to a person's physical or mental health or income
44 status. Matters of personal health and financial status are
45 traditionally private concerns, and for this reason, a person's
46 expectation of a right to privacy regarding these matters
47 necessitates the exemption. Furthermore, the exemption ensures
48 the protection of the participant's identity, who may be subject
49 to abuse or exploitation as a result of his or her vulnerable
50 situation. If the participant's personal identifying information
51 were not protected, the program's mission would be significantly
52 impaired because applicants would be less inclined to
53 participate if their personal information would be made
54 available to the public. The Legislature finds that the harm
55 that may result from the release of such information outweighs
56 the public benefit that may be derived from the disclosure of
57 the information.

58 Section 3. This act shall take effect on the same date that

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59 SB 1144 or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation
60 is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension
61 thereof and becomes a law.