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January 14, 2016

The Honorable Ray Pilon
Florida House of Representatives
Room 412, House Office Building
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Re: HB 901, Exemption/Property Tax Exemptions – Disabled Persons

Dear Representative Pilon:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding HB 901, creating a public record exemption for medical and all personal identifying information of applicants for and recipients of property tax exemptions for totally and permanently disabled persons.

We do not object to the exemption for medical information, Representative Pilon, but in talking to staff, it's been explained to us that the exemption for personal identifying information is intended to include the name of the applicant or recipient allowing for anonymous property owners. Clearly, simply knowing a property owner's name does not reveal any sensitive medical information associated with the owner, and if all medical information in a property record or in an application for a disability exemption is redacted, then there's no justification for exempting identifying information.

We suggest, then, that HB 901 be amended to delete the exemption for personal identifying information while maintaining the exemption for medical information.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns, Representative Pilon. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: The Honorable Steve Crisafulli, Speaker, Florida House of Representatives
Jon Kaney, General Counsel, First Amendment Foundation
Sam Morley, General Counsel, Florida Press Association