



4 December 2015

The Honorable Garrett Richter
The Florida Senate
404 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: SB 320 Exemption/Medical Technicians or Paramedics – Home Addresses

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Director, Business Development, GEC

Dear Senator Richter:

We are writing to express our serious concerns regarding Senate Bill 320, which would create an exemption for the home addresses and other public record information of emergency medical technicians and paramedics, and their families. While the bill is based upon existing exemptions for law enforcement personnel and others, as currently drafted the required statement of public necessity provides no information justifying the exemption. The statement of public necessity merely asserts that release of this information *might* result in disgruntled persons trying to harm emergency medical technicians and paramedics or their spouses and children. We have seen no evidence that a threat of harm exists to these individuals or that such harm has in fact occurred. Further, the statement of public necessity does not identify examples of such harm, either threatened or actual. The mere mention in a subsequent bill analysis of two isolated instances of nuisance does not constitute a threat grave enough to erode the right of access guaranteed by the constitution.

It is our opinion that the statement of public necessity is speculative at best and demonstrates an utter lack of compelling evidentiary support. Because the statement does not justify the exemption, the exemption does not meet the constitutional standard for public record exemptions under Article I, s. 24 of the State Constitution. As such, we respectfully request SB 320 be withdrawn from further consideration. If you have any further questions or concerns, Senator Richter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: The Honorable Andy Gardiner, President, The Florida Senate
Jon Kaney, General Counsel, First Amendment Foundation
Sam Morley, General Counsel, Florida Press Association