



# First Amendment Foundation

Protecting Your Right to Know for 30 Years!

March 22, 2017

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The Honorable Darryl Rouson  
The Florida Senate  
404 South Monroe Street, Room 212 SOB  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: SB 1736 Exemption/Email Addresses – Judges and Justices

Dear Senator Rouson:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding SB 1736, creating a public record exemption for the business email addresses of current Supreme Court justices and judges.

According to the required statement of public necessity, public release of judicial email addresses could result in ex parte communications between a justice or judge from parties in a lawsuit. The harm stated is speculative at best and ignores the fact that such ex parte communications can also occur should a party to a lawsuit communicate with a justice or judge via conventional mail.

In our opinion, the justification for the proposed exemption is constitutionally insufficient and we respectfully request that SB 1736 be withdrawn from further consideration.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns, Senator Rouson. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: The Honorable Joe Negron, President, The Florida Senate  
Jon Kaney, General Counsel, First Amendment Foundation  
Samuel Morley, General Counsel, Florida Press Association