



03 March 2017

The Honorable Audrey Gibson
The Florida Senate
404 South Monroe Street, Room 405 Senate Office Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: SB 520 Exemption/Elder Abuse Fatality Review Teams

Dear Senator Gibson:

We are writing to express some concerns regarding SB 520, creating public record and open meetings exemptions for elder abuse fatality review teams.

While we are not opposed to the proposed exemptions, Senator, we are concerned by the lack of oversight. Specifically, lines 33 – 36 provide an exemption for portions of team meetings at which exempt meetings are discussed. There is no requirement that those closed portions of meetings be recorded. Without some record of the discussions that occurred behind closed doors, we can't be assured that the teams are limiting themselves to the conversations they're allowed to have.

We suggest, then, that SB 520 be amended to require that the closed portions of team meetings be recorded and that those recordings be made public at some specific point in time. All exempt information in those recordings would be protected under the public record exemption.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns, Senator Gibson. If you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance in drafting the suggested amendment, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

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

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