

April 4, 2019



Protecting Your Right to Know Since 1985

The Honorable Cyndi Stevenson
Florida House of Representatives
402 South Monroe Street, Room 303 HOB
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Re: Proposed Amendment to HB 281

Dear Representative Stevenson:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the amendment filed yesterday in the House State Administration Committee on your bill, HB 281. We have serious concerns regarding the amendment and would suggest that you ask its sponsor to withdraw it.

HB 281 creates a public record exemption for all information concerning preregistered voter registration applicants who are 16 or 17 years of age. Our current position on HB 281 is neutral.

The filed amendment creates a new exemption for the email addresses and telephone numbers of all registered voters and voter registration applicants, allowing access to the protected information by canvassing boards, political parties, certain candidates, and registered political committees.

We're fully aware of the complaints from voters about the seemingly endless stream of emails and telephone calls during election season, but those who are making these calls will continue to have access – the parties and PACs, primarily – while grassroots and citizen-based organizations will be denied the same opportunity to contact registered voters. We think this is patently unfair. Additionally, the statement of public necessity supporting the expanded exemption is hypothetical at best and is not supported by facts. For these reasons, we strongly urge that the amendment be withdrawn.

Thank you for your consideration, Representative Stevenson. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barbara A. Petersen".

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: The Honorable Tom Lee, The Florida Senate

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