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March 8, 2019

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The Honorable Keith Perry
The Florida Senate
404 S. Monroe Street, Room 316 SOB
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Re: SB 602 Public Records

Dear Senator Perry:

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for your meritorious bill, SB 602, which prohibits a government agency from responding to a request to inspect or copy the agency's public records by filing a civil action against the requestor.

These civil actions filed by government agencies put public record requestors – citizens and media – in the position of having to defend their right of access rather than selectively litigate access disputes.

Quite frankly, we believe this is simply wrong. Florida is one of a small number of states with a constitutional right of access to the records of our government and citizens should not be forced into court by a government agency simply because they have exercised that right.

We thank you on behalf of all Floridians, Senator Perry. If there's anything we can do to help ensure passage of this good bill, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

Cc: Jim Doughton, Publisher, *The Gainesville Sun*
Nathan Crabbe, Editor for Opinion and Engagement, *The Gainesville Sun*