

Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

CS/CS/HB 781 — Public Records

by State Affairs Committee; Government Operations Subcommittee; and Rep. Robinson, W. (CS/CS/CS/SB 844 by Rules Committee; Community Affairs Committee; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; and Senator Hooper)

The bill provides that certain exempt information, including home addresses, may be disclosed to the following persons, upon presentation of photo identification and affirmation by sworn affidavit to the county recorder, for the purpose of conducting a title search of the Official Records:

- An authorized title insurer and its affiliates.
- A title insurance agent or title insurance agency.
- An attorney duly admitted to practice law in this state and in good standing with The Florida Bar.

For each document requested within the sworn affidavit, the bill requires the requestor to identify the Official Records book and page number, instrument number, or the clerk's file number, and to include a description of the lawful purpose and identify the individual or property that is the subject of the search within the sworn affidavit.

For written requests received on or before July 1, 2021, a county property appraiser or county tax collector must comply with the request by October 1, 2021. However, a county property appraiser or county tax collector may not remove the street address, legal description, or other information identifying real property within the agency's records if the name or personal information otherwise exempt from inspection and copying is not associated with the property or otherwise displayed in the public records of the agency. Further, any information restricted from public display, inspection, or copying pursuant to a written request must be provided to the individual whose information was removed.

The bill provides that upon the death of a protected party any party can request the county recorder to release a protected decedent's removed information unless there is a related request on file with the county recorder for continued removal of the decedent's information or unless such removal is otherwise prohibited by statute or by court order.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2021.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 118-0