

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

HB 725 — Public Records and Public Meetings Exemptions

by Rep. Harrell (SB 1680 by Senator Altman)

Current law establishes the State Child Abuse Death Review Committee (CADR) and local child abuse death review committees within the Department of Health (DOH). The CADR is tasked with reviewing the facts and circumstances of the deaths of children whose deaths have been investigated by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and closed with a “verified” finding of child abuse or neglect.

Current law provides a public record exemption for any information that reveals the identity of the surviving siblings, family members, or others living in the home of a deceased child who is the subject of a review and whose information is held by the CADR or a local committee. It also provides that portions of meetings of the CADR or a local committee at which confidential or exempt information is discussed are exempt from public meeting requirements, but must be recorded. A public record exemption protects the release of such recording.

The bill removes the requirement that closed portions of meetings of the CADR or local committees be recorded, as well as the requirement that no portion of a closed meeting be off the record. The bill also removes the requirement that the CADR or local committee maintain the recording of the closed portion of the meeting.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2013.

Vote: Senate 33-6; House 88-26