

Committee on Criminal Justice

HB 7015 — OGSR/Identity of a Witness to Murder

by Government Operations Subcommittee and Rep. Fetterhoff (SB 7032 by Criminal Justice Committee)

The bill saves from repeal the public records exemption for the criminal intelligence information or criminal investigative information that reveals the personal identifying information of a witness to a murder, for two years after the date on which the witness observes the murder. The exemption makes the records confidential and exempt from public records requirements.

However, the exemption provides that a criminal justice agency may disclose such information:

- In furtherance of its official duties and responsibilities.
- To assist in locating and identifying the witness if the agency believes the witness to be missing or endangered.
- To another governmental agency for use in the performance of its official duties and responsibilities.
- To the parties in a pending criminal prosecution as required by law.

The Open Government Sunset Review Act requires the Legislature to review each public record and each public meeting exemption five years after enactment. The exemption contained in s. 119.071(2)(m)1., F.S., is scheduled to repeal on October 2, 2022. This bill removes the scheduled repeal to continue the confidential and exempt status.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2022.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 117-0