

Bill No. CS for SB 378

Amendment No. 1 Barcode 135878

<u>Senate</u>	CHAMBER ACTION	<u>House</u>
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The Committee on Governmental Oversight and Productivity recommended the following amendment:

Senate Amendment

On page 2, lines 6-25, delete those lines

and insert:

Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public necessity that personal identifying information of customers held by a water, wastewater, natural gas, electric, cable television, or telecommunications utility, owned or operated by an agency, be made exempt from public disclosure in order: (1) to prevent identity theft and fraud; and, (2) to minimize the competitive disadvantage these agencies may experience from disclosure of such information.

Unlike private utilities, public utilities in Florida are subject to open records requirements. As a result, social security numbers of customers may be available to the public. A social security number is often the link to an individual's financial, educational, medical, or familial records. As such, obtaining a person's social security number is an important

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1 part of successfully stealing an identity. Closing access to
2 social security numbers held by these agencies will minimize
3 the opportunity for identity theft. Further, if taxpayer or
4 driver identification numbers, and bank, debit, charge and
5 credit card numbers, are obtained in conjunction with social
6 security numbers, not only is identity theft more possible,
7 but the opportunity for fraud and financial loss is increased.
8 As a result, the Legislature finds that it is a public
9 necessity to close customer social security numbers, taxpayer
10 identification numbers, and bank account, debit, charge and
11 credit card numbers that are held by a water, wastewater,
12 natural gas, electric, cable television, or telecommunications
13 utility, owned or operated by an agency.

14 In addition to customer social security numbers,
15 taxpayer identification numbers, and bank account, debit,
16 charge and credit card numbers, other personal identifying
17 information, such as names, addresses and telephone numbers,
18 may be obtained under public records requirements from a
19 water, wastewater, natural gas, electric, cable television, or
20 telecommunications utility, owned or operated by an agency.
21 Given the type of services these businesses provide, this
22 personal identifying information could be used by competitors
23 to identify, target, contact and solicit specific types of
24 customers. The ability of business competitors to obtain this
25 type of information could place these public service providers
26 at a distinct competitive disadvantage and could result in
27 severe economic loss to those public entities, thereby placing
28 an increased economic burden on the less profitable customers
29 who remain with the public utility. Additionally, local
30 governments could experience declines in revenue as a result,
31 thereby causing those governments to have to reduce the

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1 services that they provide to Floridians. As a result, the
2 Legislature finds that the names, addresses, and telephone
3 numbers of customers of a public water, wastewater, natural
4 gas, electric, cable television, or telecommunications
5 utility, owned or operated by an agency, must be exempt.
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