

# **ANALYSIS OF HOUSE BILL 2963**

***Providing for disclosure of information obtained by the department of health related to meeting licensing standards in hospitals.***

**SPONSORS:** Representatives Cody and DOH request.

**BACKGROUND:** Hospitals are licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) which sets quality standards, conducts site visits and responds to consumer complaints.

Information on complaints including site visits and other information about hospital license, is currently disclosed to the public through a formal administrative action against the licensee. If a formal administrative action is initiated against a hospital license when the department finds that a hospital is not meeting quality standards, the hospital is given the opportunity to correct the problem and the department will file a health order to implement a corrective plan. In the absence of formal administrative action, the public has virtually no access to information about hospital care.

Information and documents associated with peer review committees of private hospitals are exempt from public disclosure. Peer review committees of public hospitals do not have this exemption.

**SUMMARY:** Information received by the DOH relative to hospital license must be disclosed to the public upon request consistent with the provisions of the Public Disclosure Act applicable to state agencies. Information on licensing, inspections and complaint investigations disclosed to the public within three days after the hospital receives the results of an assessment report from the department. Information regarding administrative actions against hospitals will be disclosed if the hospital has received a document initiating administrative action.

However, information and documents relating to specific quality improvement committees of public hospitals are exempt from disclosure.