

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5787

As of February 25, 1999

Title: An act relating to limiting disclosure of personal information about school employees.

Brief Description: Limiting disclosure of personal information about school employees.

Sponsors: Senators Costa, McAuliffe, Fairley and Fraser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 2/25/99.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Staff: William Bridges (786-7424)

Background: The Public Disclosure Act (PDA) requires all state and local agencies, including school districts, to disclose any public record upon request, unless the record falls within certain specific exemptions. For example, the PDA exempts personal information in school district files that are maintained for an employee or official, if disclosure would violate the employee's or official's right to privacy. Their right to privacy would be violated if disclosure of the information would be highly offensive to a reasonable person and the information would not be of legitimate concern to the public. If a document contains information that would violate the right to privacy, the document must still be disclosed if the private material can be removed.

The PDA also exempts the residential addresses and residential telephone numbers of school district employees or volunteers that are held by a district in personnel records, employment or volunteer rosters, or mailing lists of employees or volunteers.

Some school district employees are concerned that their personal information, including residential addresses and telephone numbers, may be disclosed by an education agency that is not their employer, such as the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Summary of Bill: A new section is added to the PDA.

The PDA exempts from public disclosure personal information about a school district employee, volunteer, or official that is maintained in the files of a school district, educational service district, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the State Board of Education, if the disclosure would violate the right to privacy of the employee, volunteer, or official. This new exemption cannot be used to justify the disclosure of personal information about other public employees that may be contained in such files.

The PDA exempts from public disclosure the residential addresses and residential telephone numbers of school district employees, volunteers, or officials that are held by a school district, educational service district, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction,

or the State Board of Education in personnel records, employment or volunteer rosters, or mailing lists of employees or volunteers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.