Government Operations & Elections Committee

HB 1715

Brief Description: Allowing the department of corrections to exempt information contained in the internal database on security threat group data from dissemination under the public records act.

Sponsors: Representatives Klippert, Goodman and Moscoso; by request of Department of Corrections.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts from public disclosure information contained in the security threat group database.

Hearing Date: 2/21/13

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

The Public Records Act (PRA) requires that all state and local government agencies make all public records available for public inspection and copying unless they fall within certain statutory exemptions. The provisions requiring public records disclosure must be interpreted liberally and the exemptions narrowly in order to effectuate a general policy favoring disclosure.

The Department of Corrections' (DOC) special investigations services unit collects, evaluates, collates, and analyzes data and specific investigative information concerning the existence, structure, activities, and operations of security threat groups, drugs, and violence within DOC facilities and the participants involved. The data is entered into a centralized database and is used to maintain the safety and security of offenders, staff, facilities, and the public. Upon request, the data may be used to assist law enforcement agencies and prosecutors in developing evidence for purposes of criminal prosecution.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

All information contained in the security threat group database is confidential and exempt from public disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.