

6257-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Brandland, Kline, McCaslin, Roach, Winsley, Regala, Rasmussen, Shin and Oke)

Brief Description: Addressing the protection of personal and identifying information.

SB 6257-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST OF PROPOSED 1ST SUBSTITUTE)

Finds placement of electronic records on the internet and web sites has increased the general public's access to records at unprecedented levels. Available records may contain personal and identifying information, such as residential addresses, telephone numbers, and social security numbers. Document identification and security mechanisms to restrict release of personal and identifying information contained in official public records lag behind advancements in electronic dissemination.

Declares that members of the public may be unaware that documents containing personal and identifying information are increasingly placed on searchable web sites. Increased access to personal and identifying information has resulted in dramatic increases in identity theft.

Finds that release of personal and identifying information specifically linked to the name and job title of employees in the criminal justice and judicial systems may increase exposure of those individuals and their families to identity theft, harassment, or physical harm. The legislature finds the public's legitimate right to hold public employees accountable can be achieved without access to and dissemination of personal and identifying information that may subject an employee and that employee's family to an increased danger of physical harm, identity theft, or harassment.

Declares that this act is intended to assist employees of the criminal justice and court systems to limit release of personal and identifying information to the general public.

Establishes a task force on the protection of personal information.

Requires the task force to: (1) Identify the types of personal and identifying information available to the public on local and state agencies' internet web sites;

(2) Research the accessibility of personal and identifying information that is available on the internet;

(3) Identify potential risks created by such accessibility;

(4) Identify state and local agencies' practices and policies regarding placing public records on the internet; and

(5) Identify methods to reduce the risks created by accessibility of personal and identifying information while complying with the public disclosure laws and this state's policy on public accessibility to information.

Directs the task force to make a preliminary report of its findings and recommendations to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2004.

