

CHAPTER 2023-52

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 946

An act relating to public records; amending s. 15.16, F.S.; providing an exemption from public records requirements for e-mail addresses and secure login credentials held by the Department of State relating to electronically filed records; defining the term “secure login credentials”; providing retroactive applicability; providing for future legislative review and repeal of the exemptions; providing a statement of public necessity; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (3) of section 15.16, Florida Statutes, as amended by chapter 2022-190, Laws of Florida, is amended to read:

15.16 Reproduction of records; admissibility in evidence; electronic receipt and transmission of records; certification; acknowledgment.—

(3)(a) The Department of State may cause to be received electronically any records that are required or authorized to be filed with it pursuant to chapter 48, chapter 55, chapter 117, chapter 118, chapter 495, chapter 605, chapter 606, chapter 607, chapter 610, chapter 617, chapter 620, chapter 621, chapter 679, chapter 713, or chapter 865, through facsimile or other electronic transfers, for the purpose of filing such records. The originals of all such electronically transmitted records must be executed in the manner provided in paragraph (5)(b). The receipt of such electronic transfer constitutes delivery to the department as required by law. The department may use electronic transmissions for purposes of notice in the administration of chapters 48, 55, 117, 118, 495, 605, 606, 607, 610, 617, 620, 621, 679, and 713 and s. 865.09. The Department of State may collect e-mail addresses for purposes of notice and communication in the performance of its duties and may require filers and registrants to furnish such e-mail addresses when presenting documents for filing.

(b)1. E-mail addresses collected by the Department of State pursuant to this subsection are exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution. This exemption applies to e-mail addresses held by the Department of State before, on, or after the effective date of the exemption.

2. Secure login credentials held by the Department of State for the purpose of allowing a person to electronically file records under this subsection are exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution. This exemption applies to secure login credentials held by the Department of State before, on, or after the effective date of the exemption. For purposes of this subparagraph, the term “secure login credentials” means information held by the department for purposes of authenticating a user logging into a user account on a computer, a computer system, a

computer network, or an electronic device; an online user account accessible over the Internet, whether through a mobile device, a website, or any other electronic means; or information used for authentication or password recovery.

3. This paragraph is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed on October 2, 2028, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public necessity that all e-mail addresses and secure login credentials held by the Department of State relating to electronically filed records be exempt from public records requirements. The Legislature finds that the unintentional publication of such information may subject the filer to identity theft, financial harm, or other adverse impacts. Without the public records exemption, the effective and efficient administration of the electronic filing system, which is otherwise designed to increase the ease of filing records, would be hindered. For these reasons, the Legislature finds that it is a public necessity to exempt such information from public records requirements.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor May 11, 2023.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 11, 2023.