

From: **Douglas Goodman** <[DGoodman@ashlandpolice.us](mailto:DGoodman@ashlandpolice.us)>  
Date: Fri, Jun 11, 2021 at 2:14 PM  
Subject: Written Comments for June 14 Subcommittee Meeting  
To: [foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov) <[foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov](mailto:foiacouncil@dls.virginia.gov)>  
Cc: Douglas Goodman <[DGoodman@ashlandpolice.us](mailto:DGoodman@ashlandpolice.us)>

Good afternoon;

I would like to respectfully submit my comments to two of the below bills the Council is reviewing this coming Monday, June 14, 2021:

HB2196 would open up law enforcement discipline records to the public which are currently precluded from release. Although I appreciate the patrons' efforts to minimize any impact on witnesses, involved officers families, etc., I believe this would have a detrimental effect on the law enforcement profession. If this information is needed for the furtherance of civil action against the officer, the remedy of a subpoena duces tecum is already available to plaintiffs. This revised language in the bill would open law enforcement officers up to scrutiny that most other public professions are not. This past year has already seen good officers resign or retire in lieu of spending one more day in uniform with the expectations that they execute their duties perfectly everyday without room for human error. As for my agency, I have a vacancy rate unprecedented in modern history and am worried that core services in the near future will be in jeopardy. I would be opposed to this bill as written currently. Please consider action on this carefully.

HB2000 would allow FOIA requestors up to 2-hours of a government entities' time and effort to locate documents without cost. In my own agency, we have a policy of not charging for requests under 15 minutes. This is adequate time for most of the requests received to include copies of accident reports, requests for criminal incident data, etc. and can be accommodated by existing staff. But typically for more complex requests that are 2+ hours, we often have to ask staff to work overtime to gather the data. For most of us in lean local governments, our staffing levels are built for just the day to day task without margin for extra significant tasks. We find that on occasion, simply informing requestors of the reasonable cost that could be levied often result in the requestor narrowing their request to a more reasonable level and focused on exactly what they needed vs. just a blanket approach. I would be opposed to the language in this bill.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of my reflections.

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