

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to public records; amending s. 823.15,
 3 F.S.; providing an exemption from public records
 4 requirements for records containing certain
 5 information pertaining to persons with legal custody
 6 of an animal from an animal shelter or animal control
 7 agency operated by a local government; providing for
 8 future legislative review and repeal of the exemption;
 9 providing a statement of public necessity; providing
 10 an effective date.

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

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 14 Section 1. Subsection (7) is added to section 823.15,
 15 Florida Statutes, to read:

16 823.15 Public or private animal agencies; sterilization
 17 required for dogs and cats released; recordkeeping requirements;
 18 microchipping; public records exemption.-

19 (7) Personal identifying information of a person who
 20 fosters, adopts, or otherwise receives legal custody of an
 21 animal from an animal shelter or animal control agency operated
 22 by a county, municipality, or other incorporated political
 23 subdivision held by the shelter or agency is exempt from s.
 24 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution. This
 25 subsection is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act

26 in accordance with s. 119.15 and shall stand repealed on October
27 2, 2029, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through
28 reenactment by the Legislature.

29 Section 2. The Legislature finds that it is a public
30 necessity that the personal identifying information of a person
31 who fosters, adopts, or otherwise receives legal custody of an
32 animal from an animal shelter or animal control agency operated
33 by a county, municipality, or other incorporated political
34 subdivision held by the shelter or agency be made exempt from s.
35 119.07(1), Florida Statutes, and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State
36 Constitution. The Legislature finds that, as reflected in s.
37 823.15(1), Florida Statutes, it is an important public policy of
38 the state to encourage the fostering, adoption, or receipt of
39 animals and to reduce euthanasia rates for animals in animal
40 shelters and animal control agencies. Although such shelters and
41 agencies are motivated to find new homes or placements for
42 animals in their custody, potential fosterers, adopters, and
43 other persons considering receiving legal custody of animals may
44 become discouraged from fostering, adopting, or receiving legal
45 custody of the animals if the prior owners who lost or
46 surrendered legal custody of the animals, or who did not reclaim
47 the animals within the applicable time periods, can obtain their
48 personal identifying information and attempt to regain legal
49 custody of the animals from such persons through stalking,
50 harassment, or intimidation. As such, the release of such

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51 personal identifying information may jeopardize the safety of
52 animal fosterers, adopters, and other persons receiving legal
53 custody of animals and may have a chilling effect on the
54 recruitment of persons to adopt, foster, or otherwise receive
55 legal custody of animals from an animal shelter or animal
56 control agency.

57 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.