

2005 SENATE BILL 214

May 24, 2005 – Introduced by Senator HANSEN, cosponsored by Representatives SHERIDAN, ZEPNICK and BERCEAU. Referred to Committee on Campaign Finance Reform and Ethics.

1 AN ACT to create 19.34 (1m), 19.91, 59.52 (2m) and 165.25 (12) of the statutes;

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relating to: notice of the open meetings and public records access laws.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Currently, each state and local governmental unit must adopt, prominently display, and make available for inspection and copying at its offices a notice containing a general description of its organization and the established times and places at which, the legal custodians from whom, and the methods whereby the public may obtain information or copies of records in its custody and the costs thereof. There is no parallel requirement under the open meetings law, but state and local governmental bodies must provide notices of their meetings in the manner specified in that law.

This bill requires each county, city, village, and town to prominently display a copy of the general statutory provisions governing access to public records in each of its offices that is accessible to the general public. The bill also requires each governmental body of a county, city, village, and town to prominently display a copy of the open meetings law in each of its offices that is accessible to the general public. In addition, the bill directs the Department of Justice to prepare and periodically revise as necessary a description in plain language of the effect of the open meetings law and the general statutory provisions governing access to public records. The bill provides that if a county publishes a directory the county shall include the description in the directory.

No specific penalty applies to violations, although the requirements imposed under the bill are enforceable through the court system.

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For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1	SECTION 1. 19.34 (1m) of the statutes is created to read:
2	19.34 (1m) Each county, city, village, and town shall prominently display a copy
3	of ss. 19.31 to 19.39 in each of its offices that is accessible to members of the public.
4	SECTION 2. 19.91 of the statutes is created to read:
5	19.91 Posting requirement. Each governmental body of a county, city,
6	village, and town shall prominently display a copy of this subchapter in each of its
7	offices that is accessible to members of the public.
8	SECTION 3. 59.52 (2m) of the statutes is created to read:
9	59.52 (2m) Description of public records and open meetings laws. If the
10	county publishes a directory, the clerk shall ensure that the directory includes the
11	description of the public records and open meetings laws prepared by the department
12	of justice under s. 165.25 (12).
13	SECTION 4. 165.25 (12) of the statutes is created to read:
14	165.25 (12) DESCRIPTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS AND OPEN MEETINGS LAWS. Prepare,
15	periodically revise as necessary, and transmit to each county clerk a description in
16	plain language of the effect of ss. 19.31 to 19.39 and subch. V of ch. 19, including an
17	explanation of the courses of action available to persons who believe that a violation
18	of those provisions has occurred or is occurring.
19	(END)