

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION STATEMENT ON
HOUSE BILL 5550, AN ACT CONCERNING A TECHNICAL CHANGE
CONCERNING GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND EXEMPTING COURSE
SYLLABI FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.**

March 18, 2026

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Commission opposes House Bill 5550, which seeks to amend Section 1-210(b) of the FOI Act to exempt from disclosure “records created by or for the faculty or staff of a public institution of higher education that consist of course syllabi.”

There is great public interest in teaching conducted at public institutions of higher education, including, but not limited to, what is taught, how instruction is delivered, and how students are evaluated. Providing access to course syllabi ensures that the public understands how taxpayer-funded educational programs function and promotes transparency in public education. In furtherance of these interests, public institutions have implemented publicly accessible databases of course syllabi.¹ This includes the University of Connecticut (“UConn”), which maintains a publicly accessible database of course syllabi.²

In addition, the FOI Commission does not believe that adopting a wholesale exemption for course syllabi is necessary. Rather, existing law affords protections against disclosure where appropriate. For example, to the extent disclosure of course syllabi, or portions thereof, may result in a safety risk, the FOI Act provides that such records may be withheld. *See* Section 1-210(b)(19). The FOI Act also provides an exemption for trade secrets and commercial or financial information. *See* Section 1-210(b)(5). The Commission also wishes to make the committee aware that it has previously been held, under the facts and circumstances of a particular case, that an individual professor was not a “public agency,” and that his presentations were not “public records.”³ The Commission has also recognized that the federal Copyright Act places limitations on a public agency’s ability to reproduce certain materials.⁴

For these reasons, the Commission opposes House Bill 5550.

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¹ *See e.g.*, The Ohio State University, *Syllabus Search*, [The Ohio State University - Registrar - Syllabi](#); Southern Utah University, *Syllabus Search*, [Syllabi - mySUU](#); University of Georgia, *Public CV and Syllabus System*, [UGA Public CV and Syllabus System](#); University of Texas, *Access Syllabi and CVs*, [Access Syllabi and CVs](#); and West Virginia University, *Syllabi Collection*, [Syllabi by Subject | West Virginia University Research | The Research Repository @ WVU](#).

² University of Connecticut, *Syllabus Repository*, [Syllabus](#)

³ *Fromer v. Freedom of Info. Comm’n*, 90 Conn. App. 101 (2005).

⁴ *See e.g.*, Docket #FIC 2015-867; *Kaminski v. State of Connecticut, Department of Correction* (Aug. 24, 2016).